



BADGER BONSAI NEWS

October 2023

President's Message

By Ron Fortmann

Fall is approaching and as daylight length gets shorter and overnight temperatures get lower, these two signals tell trees it is time to prepare for winter's upcoming wrath. It's also time for us to prepare our trees. At this month's meeting we will discuss some tasks we should consider doing to help our trees get ready for winter. This includes timing based on temperature, not calendar days; watering/fertilizing at this time of year; preventative pest control options; and pruning and wiring you can do now.

Your board has been investigating "new" payment options for membership renewals and other financial transactions for members. We will talk about this and when we hope to be able to offer these changes.

Just like in the real world, elections are on the horizon for our November meeting. Your current Board members may seek to serve another term in their current positions, but we are also seeking nominations from members who would like to serve on the Board, and these will be included in the election. The Board will open another "at-large" Board position to someone interested in serving the club in future years in an officer role, which includes President, Vice President, Treasurer, or Secretary. Serving on the Board in an at-large position gives you exposure to learning how the business and planning of the club works without having the duties of an officer. It's also an opportunity for you to contribute to decisions that impact the club's success.

To be on the Board, your knowledge about bonsai is secondary to the other knowledge and skills you have to contribute. So please consider serving because there are term limits on most Board positions and "new" Board members invigorate the club with fresh ideas.

Currently we are also seeking a new website manager be-

Continued on Pg 2



BADGER BONSAI
Society

Promoting and enjoying the
ancient art of bonsai since 1972.

CLUB OFFICERS AND ROLES

President	Ron
Vice President.....	Mary
Secretary.....	Lisa
Treasurer.....	Ken
Web Manager.....	Jason
Newsletter	Lisa
Librarian	Alex
Past-President.....	Wayne
At-Large Board Member.....	Zach
At-Large Board Member.....	Skyler

*Badger Bonsai News is a monthly
publication of the Badger Bonsai Society.*

<https://badgerbonsai.net>

UPCOMING EVENTS

BBS OCTOBER MEETING

Thursday, October 12, 6:30—8:00 pm
Olbrich Botanical Gardens
3330 Atwood Avenue

Agenda:

- Fall preparation for deciduous trees
- Preventative pest control
- Board nominations

cause Jason is stepping down from that position. Let us know if this is something you are interested in!

Another area any member can contribute is providing ideas and/or content for the monthly newsletter. Lisa has done a wonderful job of creating a very nice visual newsletter, but we cannot expect her to come up with content month after month. This is where each and every member can help. Next time you watch a YouTube video about bonsai, see something interesting on social media, come across an interesting article in a magazine, read a good book, work on one of your trees (we love progression photos) or find a great deal at the local nursery or another store (such as Wayne's colander find on pg 6), share it with Lisa at Badgerbonsaisociety@gmail.com so she can share it with all of us. These types of things can be big a inspiration for others who might want to give it a try themselves.

Just come up with a basic story and Lisa will be more than happy to help you polish it for publication. Even something as simple as sharing a link to an interesting website is valued and appreciated.

As we ride the wave to the end of the year, the current and newly elected Board members need your input as to what type of content/programs you would like to see in 2024 and beyond. Our club goal is to present content that is of seasonal value and that grows all levels of our members knowledge, skills and abilities. Don't hold those ideas until we ask. Pass your ideas along anytime something comes to mind and we'll add it to our collection for future activities and meetings.

What I hope to convey in this message is that Badger Bonsai Society is YOUR club and YOUR input and participation will make it what YOU want and need it to be. Your feedback and ideas are essential.

Don't forget, Show and Tell has become a very popular segment at our meetings and we will continue that segment at future meetings including this month.

See you on October 12th.

Musings and a Poem about Trees

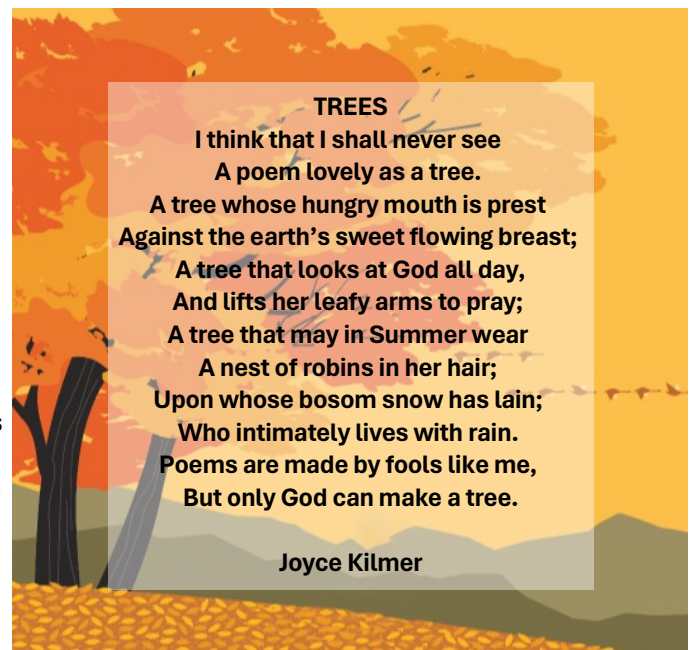
By Karl

Joy Morton and Joyce Kilmer were both famous Americans, and both loved trees. Nothing too unusual about that. But, contrary to what you might have guessed from their given names, they were both males.

You are probably familiar with Joyce Kilmer's famous poem "Trees." It's short and succinct – a little like a Japanese haiku. It is usually the last two lines that people are most familiar with. Sadly, Kilmer was killed in action in WWI at the age of 31. Why was he named 'Joyce'? He was named after a family friend - the rector at Christ Church in New Brunswick, the reverend Elisha Brooks Joyce.

Joy Morton has a history a little closer to Wisconsin. He was born in Detroit and grew up in Nebraska. As an adult, he owned and operated the Morton Salt ('when it rains, it pours') company in Chicago, and became quite wealthy. He built a large estate on land just west of Chicago in Lisle, and devoted much of the property to establishing an arboretum. In 1922 it was donated to the public and it was named Morton Arboretum. Joy's father was J. Sterling Morton, and was probably the main influence in Joy's interest in trees. J. Sterling was the instigator and founder of Arbor Day in America. On April 10, 1872 one million trees were planted in Nebraska in celebration of the first Arbor Day. Joy's given name is a family surname on his mother's side.

Morton Arboretum is now the location of the Prairie State Bonsai Society show. PSBS meets the first Wednesday of the month at the College of DuPage, not too far from the Arboretum. The other, and larger bonsai society in the Chicago area, is the Midwest Bonsai Society, which meets at the Chicago Botanic Garden.



September Meeting Happenings

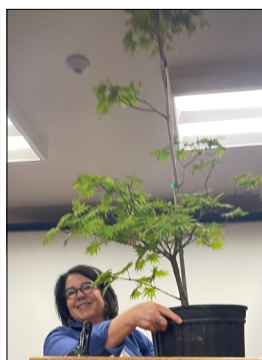
TELL & SHOW MOHS



Paolo has been working with his Barbados cherry to unstraighten the trunk



Loren worked on this Itoigawa juniper at a Mark Fields workshop in Chicago. He's using a pond container for a training pot.



Lisa will air layer this Home Depot acquired Japanese moon maple in the spring.



Skylar showed us some new additions to his suiseki collection.



Zach got this larch from a friend who got too busy for bonsai.



Colin showed his Chinese quince with an interesting trunkline.



Tim made diaza for his two viewing stones, one of which he had gotten from Karl 25 years ago



Robert brought his boxwood specimen to his first meeting.



From left, Tim, Colin with his new China doll, and Yumi.

RAFFLE WINNERS!

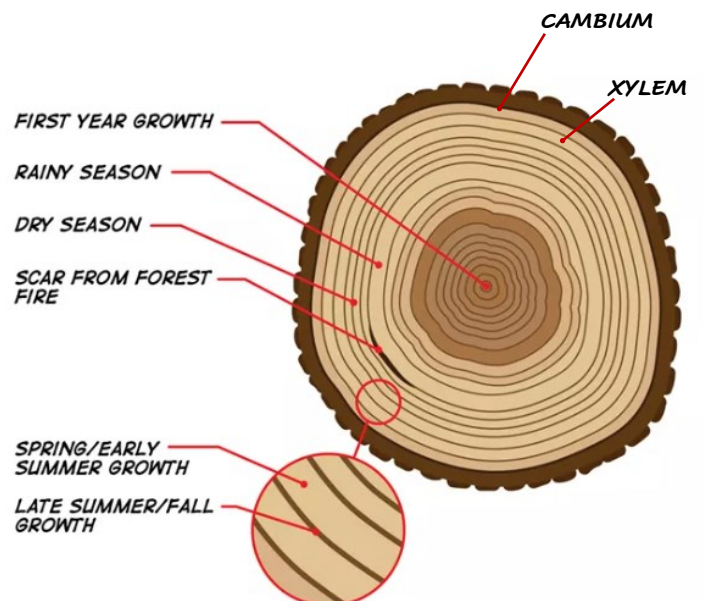
September Meeting Happenings



September's Badger Bonsai Society meeting was all about wiring to set our bonsai up for success in the coming year. In early fall trees are in the process of vascular growth, which supports strong new bud development and back budding in many species during the spring growth flush. Fall is a great time to wire branches into their desired position because wire can stay on longer during winter dormancy to help those branches set in place.

Did you know?

Tree rings are created during autumn vascular growth when the tree's xylem and cambium begin to thicken and become tougher. One new ring develops each year as the tree expands its ability to sustain more and more growth.



A Blast from the Past

Wisconsin State Journal, Sunday, July 16, 1995

THE BUSINESS of Bonsai

O'Rourke hopes to cultivate big success from the creation of miniature trees

Ron was at home minding his own business when he came across this blast from Tim's past. It was just too good not to share!

By John Aehl
Wisconsin State Journal

An Irishman with a bonsai business: That has to be worth a look.

And so it is. Tim O'Rourke opened his small store, the Wisconsin Bonsai Nursery, at 1937 Winnebago St., on April 18. He is ready for the city of Madison to go bonsai crazy.

Of course, before one does that, one should know what is being talked about here:

Bonsai (pronounce it *bone-sigh*) is the Orient-originated but now worldwide art of dwarfing and shaping trees and shrubs in shallow pots by pruning and controlling fertilization.

The translation is "tray planting." There is nothing mys-

'I have been involved actively with bonsai for about nine years. I have found some of the secrets for keeping them alive and getting them started.'

terious about it, and there can be a great fascination in contemplating these miniatures.

"There is quite a bit to this art," O'Rourke said. "There's an obvious nod to the Oriental influence, but it is the Wisconsin Bonsai Nursery, which means there are things not so Oriental. It's really an art form for everybody. You won't see any bam-

On the cover: The tree is seven years old. It is a Juniper Procumbens bonsai, carefully formed and cultivated by Tim O'Rourke, owner of the Wisconsin Bonsai Nursery, a new business devoted to bonsai, the art of growing miniature trees.

'People come in to look at bonsai because they like the exotic nature of the trees. We try to capture the spirit of nature.'

boo here in my store. I try to keep away from that.

"This is Madison's first full-service bonsai shop," O'Rourke said, a claim difficult to argue with, since it is the *only* full-service bonsai shop. "I feel I can safely say I have the largest selection of bonsai pots, tools and other accessories in the state of Wisconsin."

Henry Cathey, a plant geneticist with the United States Department of Agriculture, said the aim of bonsai culture "is to develop a tiny tree that has all the elements of a large tree growing in a natural setting."

"This look is achieved, principally, by branch and root pruning and shaping, but other factors are also important," Cathey said. "The texture of the trunk, its look of age, the moss and underplantings in the container — all contribute to the illusion of a miniature tree as it is seen in nature."

Doing this does take a little time.

A presentable bonsai can be created in a few growing seasons, according to Cathey.

In general, bonsai should be kept outdoors most of the time, but they can be brought indoors for display as long as they get sunlight and are cared for properly.

"People have expected to keep these miniature trees in their offices or homes, and they just don't make it because they have to be outside, being affected by all of the seasons of

the year," O'Rourke said. "A lot of these trees have to go through a full dormancy, like regular trees."

Some tropical trees, shrubs and vines can be kept indoors continuously as bonsai.

Bonsai as an art form originated in China and was developed by the Japanese, going back to at least the 13th century. The first bonsai were ~~wild~~ trees that had been dwarfed by nature and were collected and potted.

Over the years, the Japanese devised standards of shape and form that gradually became the classic bonsai styles, according to Cathey. American bonsai growers have tended to be freer in concept and style than the Japanese.

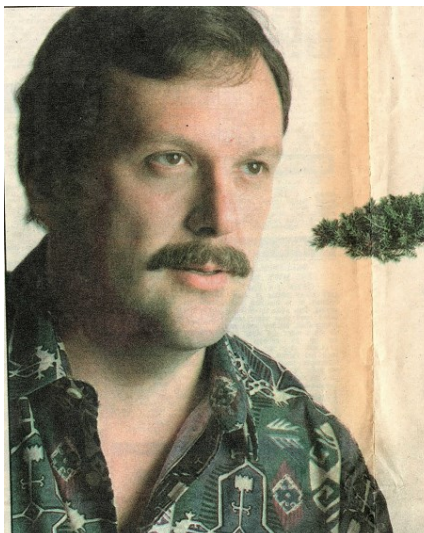
"I have been involved actively with bonsai for about nine years," O'Rourke said. "I have found some of the secrets for keeping them alive and getting them started."

He is president of the Badger Bonsai Society, which has about 75 members.

"The people in the society are maybe 15 percent of my business," he said. "People come in to look at bonsai because they like the exotic nature of the trees. We try to

'If you are buying a finished bonsai there's not much to do except see that it stays watered and has enough sun, like any plant. And once in a while you have to trim it, to keep its shape.'

capture the spirit of nature." Any tree is eligible to be bonsai, but some are better than



Tim O'Rourke's careful formation of this bonsai involves wrapping wire around the trunk of the tree to restrict growth.

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Of Interest on the Web

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.

Things to do in October

- [Prairie State Bonsai Society \(Blog Post\)](#)

Preparing Winter Quarters for Tropicals

- [Prairie State Bonsai Society \(Blog Post\)](#)

Virtual Tour of National Bonsai and Penjing Museum

- [The National Bonsai Foundation \(Video\)](#)

How to Bonsai on a Budget

- [Hooked on Bonsai \(Blog Post\)](#)

Ficus Progression

- [Bonsai Empire \(Techniques\)](#)



Follow [Badger Bonsai Society on Facebook](#) for the latest news, meeting agendas, upcoming events, and inspiring shares from the world of bonsai.

Bonsai Tool Bargain Alert

Wayne came across these 4-quart colanders at Walmart for just \$1.07 each and wanted to share this nice alternative to a training pot.



For those newer to bonsai keeping, training pots have lots of holes on the bottom and often up the sides to encourage "air pruning," which happens when the root tip starts to grow out of the hole into relatively dry air and its tip dries out and dies. Once this first root is air pruned it loses its dominance and many secondary roots develop to replace it. These are then in turn air pruned and again they are replaced by even more roots. Air pruning therefore trains a root system with a very large quantity of young vigorous roots.

The colander comes in several colors, but Wayne was partial to this turquoise blue.

Welcome New Members

We are excited to welcome four new members to the Badger Bonsai Society. Keiji, Emily, Robert, and John joined in September. Be sure and introduce yourself when you see them at our next meeting.

A Blast from the Past —Continued from Pg 1

others.
O'Rourke recently took some stems from a common indoor plant called schefflera, an ornamental with glossy leaves, bound the stems together and planted them to begin a miniaturized tree.

"There's actually a rock under the plant and the dirt," O'Rourke said. "I am slowly taking the soil away, so that what is going to happen is that the roots will be hanging around the top of the rock and it will look really neat and wild."

Another example: He took a tree from a local nursery and ran wire around its trunk and branches, forming it and restricting its growth, giving it the illusion of age, even stripping some of the bark.

"This'll be ready maybe in about two years," he said.
O'Rourke has juniper and false cypress and miniature pine and a fair variety of other bonsai in various stages of development, but he acknowledged it will take him some years to build up his inventory.

After all, one may influence nature, but it is difficult to hurry it.

"Bonsai are potted plants, so after they are formed you basically have to maintain the shape and keep them watered," O'Rourke said.

"If you are buying a finished bonsai there's not much to do

Badger Bonsai Society

The Badger Bonsai Society is always interested in new members, and demonstrations and shows on bonsai are put on periodically. There also have been classes at the Madison Area Technical College and UW-Extension.

The Badger Bonsai Society

meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Olbrich Botanical Gardens, 3330 Atwood Ave.

Tim O'Rourke, owner of the Wisconsin Bonsai Nursery in Madison, will provide information about the society. His business phone is 242-8579.

'People have expected to keep these miniature trees in their offices or homes, and they just don't make it because they have to be outside, being affected by all of the seasons.'

except see that it stays watered and has enough sun, like any plant. And once in a while you have to trim it, to keep its shape."

A brochure from the Badger Bonsai Society has this to say about the bonsai process: "Different bonsai have different viewing qualities at various

times during the year. Some species used for bonsai retain their foliage and look much the same year-round — juniper, spruce, etc. Species that lose their leaves may be prized during the winter months for the architecture of their trunks and branches. . . . It is these seasonal qualities that make a varied bonsai collection one of unending interest."

O'Rourke said the best way to begin looking into bonsai probably would be to buy a book on the subject, of which he has several in his store, or watch a videotape on bonsai, also available. Among the books O'Rourke stocks are "The Complete Book of Bonsai" and the "Step-by-Step Guide to Growing and Displaying Bonsai." There is also a \$1 pamphlet, "Growing Bonsai," published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

5 Bonsai Artists to Inspire

By Karl

Hookedonbonsai.com posted a piece about the five best bonsai artists of all time. Identifying the best in any field is always open to debate and discussion.

“Why wasn’t so-and-so included?”

“You included that guy - really?”

However, I think most people familiar with bonsai would not find too much to debate on this list.

Masahiko Kimura, Saburo Kato, John Y. Naka, Harry Hirao, and Kunio Kobayashi are five of the most famous bonsai masters

of all time who significantly helped spread the art form of bonsai around the world. Although they have different styles and specialties, they all equally helped shape the bonsai art and culture we know today.

Whether it’s through donating their masterpieces to museums, performing bonsai demonstrations internationally, offering apprenticeships, or writing books, each of these world-renowned bonsai masters have unquestionably greatly influenced and changed the landscape of bonsai art within and outside of Japan.

You can read more about these men [here](#).



1 - Widely-recognized Goshin bonsai forest by the late John Y. Naka.

2 - Approximately over 800 years old juniper bonsai by Kunio Kobayashi.

3 - Famous California juniper bonsai by the late bonsai master Harry Hirao displayed in the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum.

4 - Large bonsai forest by the late Saburo Kato showcased during the 8th WorldBonsai Convention in Japan. Photo courtesy of Mark Fields

5 - A creative bonsai forest created by Masahiko Kimura. Photo by Morten Albek.

SAVE THE DATE!

2023 BBS Calendar

Meetings are on the second Thursday of each month.

November 9 - Winter Preparation , 6:30 -8 at Olbrich

December 14 - Holiday Get-together, 6:30 –8 at Olbrich

Save the Date May 9 - 12, 2024
In Coordination with
**Meijer Gardens Michigan All- State
Bonsai Show**

 **ABS Learning
Seminars**

 **FREDERIK MEIJER
Gardens & Sculpture Park**

 **West Michigan Bonsai Club**

Guest Artists

- *Demonstrations*
- *New Talent Contest*
- *Cash Awards*
- *Vendors*
- *Banquet*
- *Welcome Reception*

 **Hugo Zamora**

 **Jack Sustic**

 **Suthin Sukosolvisit**

Additional guests

*Steve Jetzer
Mark Fields
Kurtis Smith
Matt Spinniken
Tim Priest*


BADGER BONSAI
Society

Annual Exhibit
May 18 –19, 2024

NOVEMBER 3-5, 2023

**Wisco Bonsai
Fall Fest**



**Friday, November 3 -
Open noon to 4 pm**

**Saturday, November 4 -
Open 10 am to ?**

Daytime - Free Advice: Bring a Tree Ask a Question!

Afternoon/Evening - Happy Hour Fire Pit

**Sunday, November 5th
Open 10 am - 3 pm**

Fall Cutback Workshop

DETAILS TO FOLLOW


BONSAI CENTRAL

BONSAI CENTRAL CONVENTION | MAY 3-5, 2024 | ST. LOUIS, MO

CALL FOR TREES!

The Bonsai Society of Greater St. Louis is thrilled to host **Bonsai Central**, a convention exhibiting bonsai, artists, and wares of the highest caliber. To submit a tree to this juried exhibition, see below:

SUBMISSION PACKETS SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Name and contact information
- 2-4 photos per tree
- A brief description of the tree(s)

★ **\$7500 IN CASH PRIZES**

★ **\$2500 FOR TREE THAT WINS "BEST IN SHOW"**



BRINGING THE BEST TO THE MIDWEST

EMAIL TO: SUBMISSIONS@BONSAI-CENTRAL.COM

FOR MORE INFO VISIT: WWW.BONSAI-CENTRAL.COM/ENTRIES

*ADMISSIONS ACCEPTED ON A ROLLING BASIS UNTIL FEB 1ST, 2024