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# MIDWEST BONSAI CONNECTION

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

Midwest Bonsai Society Newsletter  
Volume 55 • Issue 1 • February 2012



## President's Message

Welcome everyone to another year! Thank you to everyone who attended our Holiday Party in December, and I hope that everyone's end of year festivities were enjoyable. So far this winter, the weather has been unseasonably warm—though it's still early, so you never know what the rest of the season is going to be like. Keep one eye on your trees in winter storage and the other on the weather forecasts—we still have more months to go. The board is busy right now planning out our meetings for the year, trying to find interesting and educational items for the membership. Feedback and suggestions on programming is always appreciated—feel free to talk to any board member at a meeting if you have any comments, or email them to: [midwest.bonsai@yahoo.com](mailto:midwest.bonsai@yahoo.com). This is your Society, and we want to hear from you!

The folks at the Garden are busy getting ready for the Three Friends of Winter show at the end of January, which is a winter silhouette show. For newer members, showing trees in winter silhouette (without their leaves) is the best way to really appreciate the branch structure and ramification of advanced trees, and is a common type of exhibit in Japan. You may or may not have heard of the Kokofu-ten in Japan, which is considered the premier bonsai show in the world. Kokofu-ten is held in Feb. so that the trees can be shown in winter silhouette. Viewing a tree without its leaves lets you appreciate the more subtle details of the trees, the color and texture of the bark, the shape of the buds, the fine branch structures. The Three Friends of Winter is a much smaller show than the Society's two annual shows at the Garden, but is still a great way to spend an afternoon appreciating great trees. The show is running the last weekend in January, the 28th & 29th.

January is a time of planning for the year ahead, and for me that means looking at calendars to track the year's upcoming events. There are events for every price range, degree of interest and willingness to travel. Our two shows will be on the 3rd weekends of May and August, and are the closest and cheapest shows to attend. Regionally, the Michigan All-State Show will be the weekend before our show in May, in Grand Rapids, MI. Nationally there is the American Bonsai Society Learning Seminar in Denver, CO in June, Brussel's Rendevous in May and the International Bonsai Arboretum's 3rd National Exhibit, also in June. Details of each of these events are on our website, and will be mentioned again when we get closer to them. Remember, one of the best ways to improve your bonsai is to simply be around bonsai, and getting out to other shows and conferences are great ways to expand your knowledge.

Our first meeting of the year is coming up on Monday, Feb. 6. We will follow bonsai 101 with a brief business meeting, and then Dick Besetzny and Rich Helmaniuk will give a presentation on bonsai tool care and maintenance.

I'm often asked if there are any bonsai classes in the Chicagoland area, and the answer is yes—and Ivan Watters, the Curator of Bonsai at the Chicago Botanic Garden, and a highly respected local resource, teaches them. They are offered through the Garden, with information available on the Garden's website or from Ivan himself at our meetings. The first sessions of this year start up in April.

# Next Meeting Focus

The February meeting, scheduled at 7:30 p.m. on February 6, at the Chicago Botanic Garden's Burnstein Hall, located in the Regenstein Center, will focus on Bonsai Tool Care, Maintenance and Repair

and will be presented by Dick Besetzny and Rich Helmaniuk. There will be a Bonsai 101 talk, beginning at 7:00 p.m., topic to be determined.

# Editor's Comment

I feel honored to be invited once again to be the editor of the Midwest Bonsai Society Newsletter. It may be difficult to follow in the footsteps of Dan Dolan, who brought our simple newsletter into the 21st century, but I will do my best. I am also excited to announce that Gail Thompson, a professional graphic designer and avid bonsai student,

will be assisting in the design of the newsletter as well as other graphic documents produced to promote Society events. If you have any comments please email me at [suekazoo@hotmail.com](mailto:suekazoo@hotmail.com). Your feedback is always appreciated.

—Susan Babyk

## Bonsai Haiku:

Susan Babyk

FORM

Nature, black and white.  
All the leafless trees outline  
Winter's silhouette.



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# To All Midwest Bonsai Society Members

I would like to thank all those who contributed their Bonsai thoughts and images as well as kind

words of encouragement during my 1 year as Editor of the MBS Newsletter, Midwest Connections.

Thank you to all the rest who politely tolerated my obliquely humorous appreciation of Bonsai Art and People around the globe.

Susan Babyk and Gail Thompson have bravely accepted the challenge to create a new Newsletter for 2012. Please join me in helping them in this effort to share Bonsai information and knowledge with all of you.

Best regards,  
Dan Dolan

## 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 February

The weather had been unusually warm for January—temps in the 50's several days, little snow and little rain. Now comes February and in our area, early February can be very severe weatherwise and late February can be the beginning of early spring. It is a bit too early to repot, but if you need to repot, be sure to be vigilant about not letting your repotted trees freeze, since a cold snap can be just around the corner. When there is a break in the weather, you can wire your deciduous trees while the buds are still small.

Get your tools ready by sharpening them up. Consider your soil needs for repotting. If you need some soil send a request to Jerry. You can begin to prune deciduous trees taking care to be sure that remaining branches and shoots are in good health. If in doubt as to whether buds on a particular branch or shoot are viable, then wait to prune until you see some bud-swell. Don't forget to sterilize your tools with alcohol before going on to another tree in order to avoid spreading diseases and/or pests.

If the ground has thawed it is also possible to lift trees from the ground and do some undercutting. Leave evergreens until later. Branch pruning of deciduous and evergreen trees can be done (except Japanese maples and pines). Any major redesign and reshaping of trees can be done now. Can't wait to see what February has in store for us.

Also why I stress for everyone to know and study each species of tree you have. Knowing their natural environment and growing conditions will enable you to take much better care of that tree.

My tropicals seem to know that the days are getting longer as I can see a little more growth and some need a little pruning. My thermometer in the basement ranges from the low 50's to the mid 60's this time of year. So far, I have not seen any pests on my plants, but I remain vigilant in checking under leaves and along stems.

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

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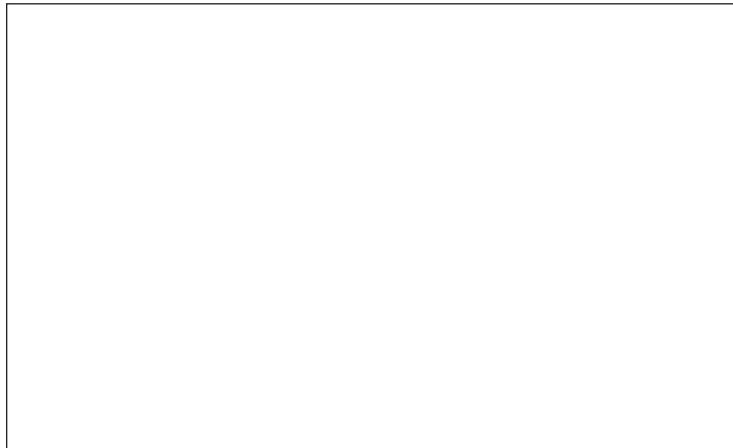
## Midwest Bonsai Society: General Meeting • Feature Topics

February	Bonsai Tool Care/Maintenance/Repair	Dick Besetzny/ Rich Helmaniuk
March	Basics of Bonsai Soil	Ivan Watters
April	Annual Repotting Session	MBS Members
May	Flowering Bonsai	Phil Malhiot
June	Tentative: Bonsai Pot Selection	Paul Weishaar
July	Tentative: Junipers	Ted Matson
August	Tentative: Bonsai Slab Construction	Darlene Kittle
September	Bonsai Botany	Cat Nelson
October	Stands & Scrolls – Discussion / Demo	TBD
November	Bonsai Carving / Jin	Ron Eriksen
December	No General Meeting	

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## Membership Request

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