

# MIDWEST BONSAI CONNECTION

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

## President's Message

To paraphrase an old song, "Some day my Spring will come". The latest cold snap might make it feel like spring will never arrive, but it is slowly sneaking in. While we are impatiently waiting to get our trees out of storage, we're doing some administrative maintenance at the Midwest Bonsai Society. We have been working to update our bylaws, which are out of date. Most of the updates are items that were already approved by prior board motions, and others are simple updates. We're including the bylaws into the newsletter to constitute the second reading that is called for for making changes in the bylaws. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to email them to: [midwest.bonsai@yahoo.com](mailto:midwest.bonsai@yahoo.com) or talk to one of the board members at the next general meeting.

We have a little bit of a change with our next meeting, which is normally our annual repotting meeting. We are moving repotting to May, and are having guest speaker Jim Doyle from Nature's Way Nursery give a presentation. This was a great chance to work

with several different bonsai clubs in the region; working together, we are all able to benefit and learn from such a distinguished artist. Jim is starting his itinerary out in NE, moving through IA and the coming to us for our meeting. After our meeting, Prairie State, the organizers of his tour, have an exciting week of multiple events with Jim in the Chicago-land

area. They have invited us to sign up for workshop slots for the Thursday and Friday workshops, details can be found on their website: [http://www.prairiestatebonsai.com/news\\_events.html](http://www.prairiestatebonsai.com/news_events.html)

Sneaking around the corner with spring, the May Show is coming up. Now, as you start to go through your trees thinking about

repotting, think about picking some to show in the May show. Our theme for our show in May is Education, with members writing up descriptions of what they're doing with their trees and the techniques they're using for training the trees. These write-ups have generated a lot of positive feedback, so please consider what you'd like to talk about this year. This show has an informal philosophy, though if you have a tree that's looking good formal displays are also welcome. One of the benefits of being a part of a Society is sharing with and learning from each other, so please bring those projects that you've been working on at home and share them with the rest of us!

The next time that we'll see each other will be at the April meeting, where guest speaker Jim Doyle will be giving a presentation on collecting trees from the wild. We will also be soliciting help for the May show, so bring your calendars and your pens and sign up for a time slot. Thank you all for your support of the Society!



THE MIDWEST BONSAI SOCIETY  
invites you to the Ninth Annual  
Spring Bonsai Show and Exhibit

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



- Bonsai Trees
- Workshops
- Vendors
- Raffles
- Demonstrations
- Banquet + Auction

© 2013 Chicago Botanic Garden

CHICAGO BOTANIC GARDEN  
1000 Lake Cook Road  
Glencoe, Illinois  
May 18 & 19, 2013  
9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.



© 2013 Jim Doyle

## Jim Doyle Events in April

(from *Prairie State Bonsai Club's website*)

### SPECIAL EVENT!

**Thursday, April 4, 2013**, the Morton Arboretum hosts Jim Doyle

**7:00 pm**— "The Elements of Japanese Gardening"

### SPECIAL EVENT!

**Friday, April 5, 2013**, the Morton Arboretum hosts Jim Doyle

**6:30 pm**— "Hornbeam Workshop"

### SPECIAL EVENT!

**Saturday, April 6, 2013**, the Chalet Nursery and Hidden Gardens Nursery hosts Jim Doyle

**9:30am**—"Bonsai 101" lecture at the Chalet Nursery in Wilmette

**1:30pm**—"Bring Your Own Tree Workshop" at the Hidden Gardens in Willowbrook

Register for workshop at Hidden Gardens Nursery

## Haiku

by Susan Babyk

### Shaping the Tree

Pick a clumsy branch.  
Cut a length of copper wire.  
Magic helps Nature.

## Chicago Bonsai Club

The Chicago Bonsai Club, a chapter of the Midwest Bonsai Society, will hold its next meeting on Wednesday, April 17, beginning at 6 p.m. We will be repotting our bonsai trees with the help of James Fairchild and Tony Welninski, so bring a plant you would like to repot,

a clean bonsai pot for the transfer, and a pair of chopsticks (or we will have plants available to practice on). Soil will be provided.

Chicago Bonsai Club meets at Garfield Park Conservatory, 300 N. Central Park Ave. (at Lake Street) in Chicago.  
Contact: [suekazoo@hotmail.com](mailto:suekazoo@hotmail.com) or call 773-235-9497.

## April Meeting Focus

The April meeting, scheduled at 7:30 p.m. on April 1, at the

Chicago Botanic Garden's Burnstein Hall, located in the Regenstein Center, will feature a presentation by Jim Doyle on collecting bonsai.

## MBS Board Members

President, Cat Nelson  
Executive VP, Rich Helminiak  
CBG Representative, Ivan Watters  
Past President, Jim Fairchild  
VP Special Events, Rich Katz  
VP Programs, Dick Besetzny  
Treasurer, Phil Troy  
Membership, Lorraine May  
Recording Secretary, Karen Schuman  
Librarian, Ron Erikson  
Editorial, Susan Babyk  
Assistant Editorial, Gail Thompson

## 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.

## Not for Profit • Copyright • Disclaimer

The Midwest Bonsai Connection is an official publication of the Midwest Bonsai Society, Inc., an Illinois Not for Profit Corporation.

This Newsletter is published monthly and may not be reproduced in whole or in part by any means without the written permission of the Midwest Bonsai Society.

The views and opinions expressed here do not necessarily represent those of the Midwest Bonsai Society membership or the Board of Directors.

# Monthly Care Report:

## What to Do in March/April

If you remember last year, we had 80 degree days in March. Way too early. This year, so far, we still have winter. I measured about 12 inches of snow after the storm last week. It will probably be gone by the time you read this. If any of your deciduous trees needing to be repotted this year, you will be able to do the repotting as soon as the winter breaks and the ground thaws, which will be soon, end of March and into April. Look to your trees for signs that they are waking. Look for swelling buds and white growing tips at the end of your roots. Those deciduous trees that you were unsure about pruning can probably be safely pruned, but protect them from heavy frost. Avoid repotting any larch that are showing green. If they are showing green, it is best to wait until next year.

Generally there is no need to begin fertilizing your 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.

In April: If you haven't repotted your deciduous trees by now, get started as April is a great month to do lots of repotting. Junipers are OK to do now, and pines can be started any time during the month. Continue to provide good after care, by protecting repotted trees

from frosts. You can begin fertilizing trees repotted in late April after you see some good growth. Keep your initial fertilizer mix on the light side for those first couple doses of fertilizer. Late April is a good time to start using your (club made) fertilizer blocks. Buy some from us if you need some.

Continue to watch for insects, especially aphids on crabapples, maples, etc. As the weather warms you will need to step up your watering routine. April is the perfect time to repot, and to branch- and root-prune. 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 may be fertilized lightly now in April and, in general, you may spray for fungus and insects on a warm day. 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.

Keep your trees cool. Don't be in a hurry to encourage early growth, as it can still get cold. April is a great month for repotting, and for digging planted trees and collecting field grown ones.

April is still a month for root-pruning, and for digging trees from yard or field. Begin your feeding, pinching, watering, and pruning schedules in earnest. Of course, be mindful of potential cold snaps, and be ready to protect vulnerable plants. This is the time we've all been waiting for!

Transplanting from one pot to another is generally done for aesthetic reasons, but soil changing is necessary for the health of the tree. Some rapidly growing trees should have their soil changed annually. Some trees can go two, maybe up to three years. Slower growing conifers and some evergreens may not need their soil changed more than every three to five years. A younger tree, still in development, will need it sooner, where an older tree less often. You also must consider the size of the pot. However, the best indicator of a need for soil change is not time, but 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 them too early you will get a big flush of growth, which translates to long internodes and larger leaves. You could literally waste a season getting them back. You can start feeding your tropicals a bit more, but it is too early to move outside. I have pruned some of my Ficus. Too

much nitrogen will go to the leaves and not the roots, hence too large of leaves. You fertilize bonsai for optimum health, not for growth per say like other plants. You need to tailor a fertilization program based on your trees individual needs.

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 you have a branch or apex you want to thicken, try to divert more energy to it by keeping your other branches trimmed back and letting that one grow. If all your main branches are good, then work on your ramification by pruning your secondary and tertiary branches back. Always prune in front of the bud that is growing in the direction you want the branch to grow. If any of the internodes towards the tip of any branch are spaced farther apart, then towards the beginning of the branch (closest to the trunk) prune back to where that elongation begins. A branch should be styled just like a tree, the secondary branches on a main branch should get smaller and closer together as you go towards the tip. The tertiary branches on your secondary branches should do the same. Doing this will help create proper ramification and taper. 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.

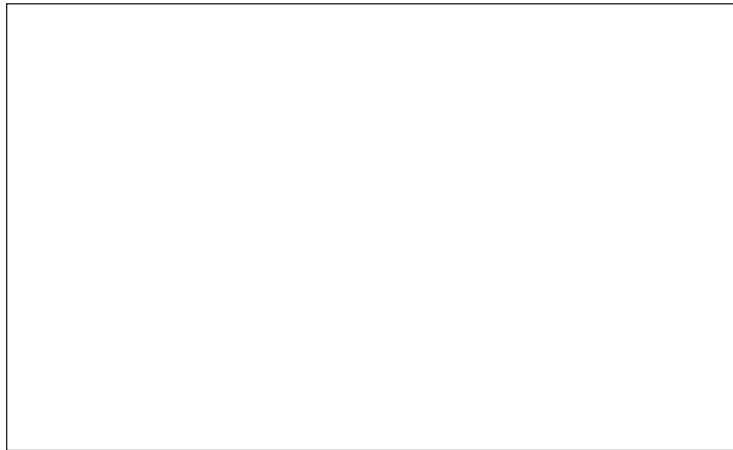
Midwest Bonsai Society  
P.O. Box 1373  
Highland Park, Illinois 60035-7373  
www.midwestbonsai.org

Midwest Bonsai Connection  
Volume 56 • Issue 3 • April 2013

---

## MBS By-Laws Revisions

As required by the Midwest Bonsai Society's by-laws, The MBS Board has conducted its third review and reading of the by-laws, and is proposing various revisions. The next step is to publish the revised by-laws, a copy of which will be inserted in the April and May MBS newsletters; and, then voted on at the June general meeting. Please review the proposed revisions, and send any comments to [suekazoo@hotmail.com](mailto:suekazoo@hotmail.com).



## Membership Renewal Reminder

As usual, July 1st is the renewal date for your Midwest Bonsai Society membership, so please fill out the "Membership

Request" form provided below, and mail it in with your check. 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.

## Membership Request

Name

---

Address

---

City, State, Zip Code

---

Telephone

---

Date

---

Email

---

Please Check If Renewal

Please make check payable to:

Send to: Midwest Bonsai Society

**Midwest Bonsai Society**

P.O. Box 1373

Highland Park, Illinois

Annual Membership • July 1st thru June 30

60035-7373

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