



the **TREE LINE**

the official monthly publication of the **BONSAI SOCIETY of PORTLAND**

May 2015

Upcoming Events

May 23-24 **Spring Show 2015**, Memorial Day Weekend, Japanese Garden

May 26 7pm **BSOP Monthly Meeting** Milwaukie Center, 5440 SE Kellogg Creek Dr

June 13 10am **OSK/Mentorship** Allan Taft residence

August 23 **Summer Picnic**, Location TBA

September 25-27 **The Artisans Cup** Portland Art Museum

October 17 **Fall Show**, Milwaukie Center, 5440 SE Kellogg Creek Dr

December 13 **Holiday Party**, Milwaukie Center, 5440 SE Kellogg Creek Dr

Words From Your President

Once again, a big WOW, for another highly successful general meeting. We truly had a huge and successful auction and raffle.

Our vendors are there each month serving your needs; please support our vendors. Remember, you can contact our vendors and pre-order from them your bonsai needs and they will bring it to the meeting for you.

A big thank you to Scott Elser and Greg Brenden for their informative presentation of NW tree species. Thanks also to those who brought trees for them to demonstrate with.

Speaking of handing out thank you's. I want to thank the board members for staying up with our increase in meeting functions, not an easy task but they have taken it all in stride.

In addition, thanks to all of our volunteers who also have been making our meetings a success. A lot of work goes into running each and every meeting and without volunteers; it would not be possible to do them.

For you caffeine addicts: Patty Myrick has volunteered to make coffee for our meetings again. Paula Bentley has also volunteered to assist her. Be sure to give them your thanks. We will have a donation jar out to support this expense, please help us to fill it.

The Spring Show: as I write this we are 8 days away from our annual Spring Bonsai Exhibit at the Japanese Garden on May 23 and 24. If you have not attended one of our shows, please do, they are outstanding. Bonsai look their best presented on stands and with accent plants.

If you have attended before, I hope to see you there again. Please contact Pat Foldi to volunteer. [Contact Eileen Knox](#) to purchase tickets to the Saturday Night Critique by Matt Reel. We have a limited number for sale.

NEW MEMBERS: I can't be more sincere when I ask you to please feel comfortable in attending not only the general meeting but to also come to our other functions as well; Shohin Kai, Mentorship, the Spring Show, Summer Picnic, Christmas Party and any other activity we have. Once again, do not be shy; we once were new members too. Please ask any member for help with anything you need to know: tree help, locating board members, Pat Foldi, Scott Elser etc.

Looking forward to being with you on Tuesday May 26th. Thanks for your trust, [Lee](#)

BSOP is Here for You

Whether you are an experienced bonsai artist or brand new to the bonsai world, BSOP is here for you. We are working to try to offer a variety of different programs that will cover all levels of expertise from beginner to advanced.

The BSOP General Meeting for May will feature tree critiques by Michael Hagedorn of Crataegus Bonsai blog and Portland Bonsai Village. Mike has asked that members bring trees that "have particular problems or questions aesthetically or horticulturally". The trees should be at or near the refinement stage. Michael will select among the trees brought in and will critique as many as time allows.

If you are interested in bringing in a tree for Mike to critique in front of the meeting attendees, [please email me](#) with the type of trees you will be bringing. We would like to have a variety of both deciduous & conifers. Once we have enough trees I will let everyone know we have reached our maximum.

For members with beginner or un-developed trees, I would encourage you to bring them to the monthly mentorship workshop usually held on 3rd Sundays (see schedule for exact dates & times). The mentorship workshop offers very beneficial hands-on work with one-on-one advice from our experts. We also offer advice at our monthly Q&A table from 6-7pm at our monthly general meeting. Additionally the Shohin Kai group meeting monthly on the 1st Saturday and occasionally has featured speakers in a whack & chat environment.

For the more advanced members, I am arranging some special workshops with guest speakers who will be coming to the area in the near future. Some of these will be held around the time of the Artisan Cup in September. Information will be sent out with details as they develop.

Thank you to Greg Brendan and Scott Elser for their informative program at the April meeting on Native Deciduous, and to Keith Wingfield for lending his expertise at the Q&A table.

I would also like to thank Karl, Phil, Michael, Ellen, Andy, Sherrie, Bill & Jan who did an outstanding job representing our club at the Pacific Rim Bonsai Museum work party in April. We had a great time and our efforts were well appreciated by the museum director. If you have not been to the museum, you should make the short drive north to visit.

Look for my monthly meeting email toward the end of the month with more details on what is happening this month. Hope to see all of you at the Japanese Garden show on May 23rd & 24th and then the general meeting on May 26th.

[Steve Leaming](#), VP Programs



Pacific Bonsai Museum specimens



JAPANESE WHITE PINE
Pinus parviflora 'Miyajima'
 宮島五葉松

Gift of Masaru Yamaki, 1976
 山木 勝

2

Pacific Bonsai Museum specimen



MENTORSHIP MEETING IN MAY

The Mentorship group is meeting on Sunday, May 17. Set up starts at 9:30am. Class goes from 10am to 1pm. Clean-up ends at 1:30pm. We will meet in the Grape Room at the Milwaukie Center, 5440 Kellogg Creek Drive, Milwaukie.

Subject matter will be a short review of seasonal pest and disease prevention and control. Then we will jump in and start working with the mentee's trees. Please join us for a great mentorship meeting; hope to see you there.

NEWCOMERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO COME AND JOIN THE FUN!!!!!!

In addition, the following are our scheduled upcoming dates for this year's mentorship meetings. Dates are subject to change. Please note June changed to a Saturday and the added "combined meeting" information below.

May Sun 17th	June 13th	July Sun 19th
Aug Sun 16th	Sept Sun 13th	Oct Sun 11th
Nov Sun 15th	Dec Sun 13th	

See

COMBINED MEETING – MENTORSHIP & SHOHIN KAI

The June meetings of the Mentorship group and the Oregon Shohin Kai will be the second Saturday, June 13, 2015. We meet from 10am to "whenever we get done". The meeting will be held at the home of Alan Taft in southwest Portland. Alan will present a short lecture/demo starting at 10:30, then work with individuals on their trees. Bring your own trees or buy some from Alan. He has a huge stock of bonsai and starter trees. Also bring your own tools and wire. The meeting will be outside, so come prepared for weather. Watch your email for location details. If you have questions, [contact Jan Hettick](#).

Jan

Remembering Tom Keefe

The art of Bonsai in Portland recently lost a good friend and tireless supporter. Thomas Richard Keefe, born May 26, 1923, died on April 18, 2015 after an extended illness. Tom joined The Bonsai Society of Portland in 1970, four years after it was incorporated by a small group of Bonsai enthusiasts. Founding members had little in common save their love for Bonsai and their desire to properly care for their special tree(s). They discovered John Naka, a Japanese landscaper living in LA. Back then he was considered a gardener; today he is recognized as the founder of Bonsai in America. Unlike the multitude of how-to books available today, forty-five years ago all we had (and still possess) is one thin pamphlet on Bonsai from the Brooklyn Botanical Society.

Most current members never had the opportunity to meet Tom or any of the early members. Yet each of us owes this small, dedicated group a debt of gratitude for their commitment to this art form we call Bonsai. Their job wasn't easy or popular. In the early 70's many Americans still harbored bad feelings toward Japan. Memories and losses from WWII influenced their judgments and compromised any appreciation of Japanese culture and art forms.

Tom Keefe embraced Bonsai as an art-form and a hobby bordering on obsession. He spent years on the Board and served two terms as President. In his first term, 1974-1976, Tom concentrated on improving the quality of the existing collections. He brought in experts to demonstrate proper wiring, branch development, and style; arranged for tree-collecting trips to Mt. Hood and other places; coordinated public displays and interactive clinics. The society grew.

In his second term 1989-1990 Tom organized a committee to convince Bonsai Clubs International to hold the 1999 convention in Portland. The convention was a resounding financial success for BSOP and BCI as well. It put Portland on the Bonsai map. Tom was also instrumental in having small regional conventions. Portland hosted the first PNBCA convention and has participated in all subsequent conventions.

Many 'hobby' organizations came and go. BSOP is still here. It's bigger and better, with tremendous talents and world-class displays. My husband Ron and I are proud to call ourselves members. Still, I wonder how much longer it would have taken to bring Bonsai to its current level without the relentless determination of our early members.

Tom is survived by his wife Lois, their children and grandchildren.

Becky Masenchak



Spring Show 2015

It's here! Just a week away. I hope that you and your trees are all ready for a great time. Just as a sneak peek, it looks like this is shaping up to be the year of the pine. Usually found in small numbers, this year we have at least one of the following; Scots Pine, Mugo Pine, Ponderosa Pine, Lodgepole Pine, Corkbark Japanese Black Pine. We are still looking for a few tree sitters and demo folks, so if you can help us out, contact Pat Foldi at patfoldi@comcast.net.

Don't forget about our Saturday evening critique with Matt Reel. Festivities begin at 6:00 pm with our finger food/dessert potluck. Critique begins at 7. Tickets can be reserved by leaving a message with Eileen Knox. Remember, this event is limited to the first 50, so don't be left out. Spouses and guests are welcome, of course.

Scott Elser

Welcome New Members!

The Bonsai Society of Portland continues to grow at a record pace! We especially would like to welcome the following members who have joined since the last issue of the Tree Line: Roderick Wyatt III, Bill Knopp, Scott and Mia Rawson, Alan Sover and Cheryl Bennett, Richard Dabney, Kris Clancy and Patrick Smith, Alex Murdock, and Nancy Ellis and Lynn Zahn. We look forward to getting to know you, and encourage you all to participate in the many opportunities available within BSOP.

Fertilizer

Portland Rose Society Fertilizer is available for delivery at the May 26 meeting. This is a specially blended organic fertilizer rated 5-4-4 with mycorrhiza. It works well for bonsai, as well as other ornamental yard plants. The pelletized fertilizer comes in 20 pound bags, selling for \$16 per bag. If you would like to pick up a bag or two between 6:30 and 7:00 before the BSOP meeting, be sure to pre-order from Bill Hettick. Note: This will be the last month Bill will be bringing fertilizer to the Milwaukie Center. It will continue to be available for pick up at his home throughout the summer.

The TREE LINE Newsletter Goes Public

The board has decided that our newsletter, an excellent source of information, should be made available to the public in support of our educational mission. This may also result in additional members which will keep our organization strong.

Past newsletters will remain visible to logged in members only. Beginning with the May edition, the publication will be visible to the public through our web site. If you are contributing articles, please be aware that you are communicating with a broader audience. Do not include information such as non-commercial addresses and phone numbers. This will protect the privacy and security of our members. Email addresses may be included but will be redirected through our web site to protect members against spam.

If you have questions, contact [Chas Martin](#) or [Lee Cheadle](#).

Change in Renewal Procedure, Change in BSOP Constitution

The Bonsai Society of Portland is growing at record levels. Over the past four years membership has ranged from 117 to 186, and in March 2014 we had 180 members. In April 2015 we have 234 members. This is a 24% increase over the previous 13 months. With this kind of growth, we are finding it difficult to process all renewals in the busy month of December, and are proposing a change to renewal on members' anniversary dates.

This requires a change in the BSOP Constitution and Bylaws. ARTICLE VI – AMENDMENTS states “These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the members present at any meeting providing notice of the proposed changes has been announced at the previous meeting and mailed to all voting members at least thirty days prior to the date of the vote.” You can view the complete Constitution on our website under Member Resources.

This article provides written notice that a vote on a proposed change to the Bylaws will occur at the May 26, 2015 general meeting.

Current Bylaws, ARTICLE IV – DUES

“Section 2. Renewal notices shall be sent in October. Dues are payable by December 31st for the following year. Membership shall expire December 31st for nonpayment of dues.”

Proposed Change:

“Section 2. Renewal notices shall be sent the month prior to the member's anniversary month. Dues for the following year are payable by the end of the member's anniversary month. Membership shall expire the last day of the of the member's anniversary month for nonpayment of dues.”

Pending approval, this change will take effect beginning October 2015. Renewal notices will be sent in September to members who joined in the month of October. In October they will be sent to members who joined in November, and so on. Members who joined in 1993 and before will be considered to have joined in August (the month with fewest renewals), because date joined was not tracked prior to that time.

Renewal notices will be sent the same way newsletters are sent - by email unless prior arrangements have been made for delivery by the postal service. Payment may be made via the club website, by VISA at the club meetings, or by check at meetings or USPS.

Historically, changing membership to a rolling renewal system raised concern about the temporary impact on our income. In the past year we have been very strong financially, and are in the best position in our history to absorb the short term fluctuation this change will have on our finances. Within a year this will balance out and have no significant impact on our budget.

Please plan to attend the May 26th meeting to vote on this proposal. If you have any questions or would like to know what month your renewal will be due, [contact Jan Hettick](#) or check at the Membership Desk at the April meeting.

Jan

MENTORSHIP TRAINING AT THE JAPANESE GARDEN BONSAI SHOW 2015

Subject: Mentorship educational lessons at the May Japanese Garden Show

Date: Saturday and Sunday May 23 and 24

Purpose: to allow guests of the Garden to watch active BSOP members in our mentorship group learn how to improve their bonsai skills by observation and asking questions.

Quantity of mentee's: We would like to fill in four, 2 hour sessions each day; 10am to 12pm, 12pm to 2pm, 2pm to 4pm and 4pm to 6pm.

Mentors: 1 to 3 mentors to assist the mentee's at each session and help the mentors as necessary to answer questions the Garden guests may have.

Material: Any trees you feel would take up at least 2 hours of time to work on. I will also bring some backup trees in case they may be needed.

Trees: conifer, deciduous, evergreen/azalea/boxwood; anything

Subjects to select trees by: wiring/styling, clip and grow. Repotting juniper from garden pot to bonsai pot. Pinching, leaf reduction, branch selection.

Mentee Tools: mentee's will bring their own tools, wire, turntables etc.

Mentor tools: Mentors should bring tools they feel they need. I will bring my large bucket of tools as well as aluminum and copper wire. Also a plastic cement bin for repotting, bonsai soil, turntables and a tarp.

Cleanup: each session of artists will assist in cleaning up the area they work in.

Arrival/departure: Scott Elser to arrange with the Garden permission for the participants of the sessions to drop off/pickup, near the gate, their needed supplies.



A small clumping Saxifrage and a curious spidery non-thalloid liverwort, possibly a *Porella*. At any rate, it's a green terrestrial cryptogam.

One of many delightful accent plants from a recent post on Crataegus Bonsai

Scott's BRANCH TIPS

BONSAI TECHNIQUE & PHILOSOPHY

The high price of too many trees

The purpose of this column, from the very beginning, has been to advance the art of bonsai in Portland as far and as quickly as we can. I have been endeavoring to share the bonsai knowledge that I have gained in 25 years of pursuing this art. Some of this information comes via direct instruction from those who have studied extensively in Japan, and other tidbits from my own personal experiences. Most of those experiences are triumphs, but a few are tragedies. This is one of those times that I hope you can learn from some of my mistakes.

As I mentioned in my last column, my bonsai collection started unobtrusively on an apartment balcony. Since that last writing, my now considerably larger collection is moving back to within a half mile of that first apartment. It will be time to pare down the collection to a more manageable size, because quite literally, that is all the space I will have. It took me many years to build up the collection, acquiring trees whenever and wherever I could to find the finest my budget would allow. I was able to amass quite a few quality trees, and many of them large. The trees are large enough that they make me think two and three times before tackling one, either for styling or maintenance. And there are so many of them. So many that I cannot properly care for them. And therein is the crux of the problem. Shifting interests and time constraints.

About ten years ago, I took up dancing (Yes, all that stuff you see on Dancing with the Stars) and that started to eat into my time with lessons, etc... It was a very good thing though, as I started spending more time with people instead of trees on Saturday night. Now that I am very happily married (Yes, we met dancing), bonsai is not one of those activities that we generally do together, but Lisa is my biggest bonsai supporter. So if you couple all those factors in with trees that are growing and developing rapidly, each season multiplying the amount of care required, it's a recipe for disaster. So, this month I have an example of what can happen when you have too many trees.

The photos tell just about everything. These branches used to belong to a Western Hemlock that won the Best Conifer award at the National Show in 2008. But the wire from that show came off only two years ago. There was always something else to do, and well, hemlocks don't grow too fast, do they? I will get to it next month. And the next month. And I really can't see up inside there too well. It was a shock to see just how much I had let things cut in. Eileen Knox was so kind to help me unlock the tree from it's bonds, but as you can see, some of branches were way beyond repair. I cut the ones shown off a year after the wire was removed. In one section, we simply removed the entire lower branch (Which improved the tree significantly). As you can see in the photos, some of the wire was simply embedded too far to get out. So, now I have some hints on how to avoid and correct this situation.

1. Make sure you can maintain the trees that you have. Having too many will not do justice to the ones you that you cherish. Only you can decide that number, but I bet you have some neglected ones. Go for the best.

My addiction is that I like a great number of species, deciduous and conifers, and many forms. And of course large ones. I just de-wired a large mountain hemlock. It took five ours just for that little chore.

2. Wire cutting in is very predictable in certain areas, so check there first. The apex – it's always growing much stronger than the rest of the tree and thus thickens much faster. Any place that you made sharp bends. The more the tissue is damaged, the more repair that is needed and that is where it thickens the most. Small wire on a branch with larger wire. This one is trickier. Since you have large wire on a larger branch, you don't always notice how tight the fine little wire is, like a tourniquet, strangling the tree. Since it is fine, it buries itself deep very quickly.
3. Watch deciduous trees in the spring – they are elongating rapidly and the negative effects of even the slightest scarring can take awhile to mitigate. Watch your conifers in the fall, when they are literally bulking up, storing up reserves for the winter.
4. Always remove wire in the same order that you put it on. That means starting with all the fine wire on the tips of a main branch, then working back up the branch, gauge by gauge. That way the branches are supported as you unwind.
5. Remove fine wire by unwinding. I unwind everything up to about 14 gauge, then I get out the wire cutters somewhere between 14 & 12. Two reasons. The first being that you will always miss some of the fine wire if you don't keep it in one piece by unwinding. The second is that you risk actually cutting the branch off with fine wire. The bottom line is to always use the method that will cause the least amount of damage to the tree. Be ABSOLUTELY SURE to support the branches just as you did when you applied the wire. Remember, especially with copper that work hardens, the wire is twice as strong as when you put it on. If you are not careful, it will just rip a branch right off, no questions asked.
6. To remove deeply embedded wire, unwind it as much as you can, retracing the steps you made when you put it on. This may require you to cut it after each revolution. On completely buried wire, I sometimes cut one end short, making sure it is straight as possible, then pull it through the other side.

Remember, all is not lost, even with heavy scarring. The tree has already been rerouting the flow of resources around wire, so if you remove it with care, it will just keep on growing. Seal any bark that comes off with cut paste. Light scarring will dissipate over time, even on something like a maple. In a conifer, foliage can be arranged to hide something excessively grotesque. Or, you can simply cut it off and replace it with something else. Above all, don't get your hands stuck in the cookie jar with too many trees to take care of.

Scott





Leaving wire on too long

Recycle Wire

Please bring your used copper wire to the monthly meetings. Roger Case will have a five gallon bucket available to collect used copper wire to turn in for cash for the club. Take advantage of the fact that he has volunteered to do this for the club to generate income for BSOP.

Bonsai Supplies from Wee Tree Farm

We have a large selection of pottery, trees of all sizes and price range, tools, soils and miscellany. Our retail store is located inside **Garland Nursery** which is a destination in itself with 5 acres of plants and displays to delight and inspire. Come see us, we promise it is worth the drive!

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Welcome to the Village



BONSAI SOCIETY of PORTLAND

P. O. Box 21271
Keizer, OR 97307

The Bonsai Society of Portland meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month except in summer, when other group outings are arranged.

The Milwaukie Center
5440 SE Kellogg Creek Drive, Milwaukie OR 97222

Enter parking lot from Rusk Road

Visitors are always welcome!

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