



# the **TREE LINE**

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

April 2015

## Upcoming Events

April 19 Sunday 10am-1pm **Mentorship** Milwaukie Center, 5440 SE Kellogg Creek Dr

April 25 Saturday all day **Pacific Bonsai Museum Work Party**

April 28 7pm **BSOP Monthly Meeting** Milwaukie Center, 5440 SE Kellogg Creek Dr

May 2 10-2pm **OSK** Milwaukie Center, 5440 SE Kellogg Creek Dr

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 6 10-2pm **OSK** Milwaukie Center, 5440 SE Kellogg Creek Dr

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

## Words From Your President

Our March meeting was stronger than our outstanding February meeting. Our membership is above 215 at this time and bonsai is alive and well in Portland! Once again we had a successful silent auction, vendors selling their wares. The raffle too was successful in its new format.

Folks utilized the new Question and Answer table in its second outing. Our two headliners, Dennis Vojtilla and Greg Brenden were great speakers and did a great presentation as well. It was, once again, a 5 ring circus of activity. Thanks to all that helped make it a success. I hope you do not despair of me always saying that volunteers are what make our club successful; it is so important.

Keep in mind that we are coming up to our spring show. Scott has recruited Pat Foldi to gather together volunteers for this yearly event. Please contact her and let her know when and for what you are available. Scott will be discussing the spring show at our April meeting.

Lastly, **NEW MEMBERS**, we need and want you too for all activities. Please do not be shy; we once were new members too. Please ask any member for help with finding anything you need to know: tree help, locating board members or Pat Foldi or Scott Elser etc.

Looking forward to being with you on Tuesday April 28th.

Thanks for your trust, *Lee*

# It's Bonsai Time

The early spring weather this year has been a real plus in the bonsai world. Extra early re-potting was certainly a bonus, not to mention the ability to spend some nice dry days outdoors getting reacquainted with the trees as they put on a show of new foliage....now I'm on to trying to keep up with pruning and staying on top of pest control. 1st quarter of this year has been amazing!

I'm very happy with the attendance at our monthly meetings, and it's nice to see so many new members joining BSOP. The new Question & Answer table is proving to be a valuable tool! If you have a tree you want to bring in to get some advice, or just stop by to ask a question, our seasoned members are there to give suggestions & direction. A big thank you to those who have helped cover the table and to those who have agreed to in coming months. We can use additional coverage at the Q & A table so if you can help, please let me know which months you are available. Contact me at [stevenleaming@gmail.com](mailto:stevenleaming@gmail.com).

I would highly encourage all of our new members to attend both Shohin Kai (1st Saturdays 10am) and the Mentorship (3rd Sundays 10am) workshops. As I began my journey into Bonsai I found these two programs to be invaluable in my learning process. You will get one on one, hands-on help and expert advice from experienced members that will increase your knowledge of technique and chances for successful bonsai.

April Meeting Program: This month Greg Brenden and Scott Elser will be giving a presentation on Native Deciduous Trees for Bonsai. This is the second half and follow up to last year's program on Coniferous Natives. As last year, this will be a survey of as many species and live examples as they can round up. Topics to be covered will be where to find and how to collect, as well as techniques for developing and caring for this relatively unexplored group of materials. Expect to see collected hawthorns and maples as well as field grown alders and crab-apples. Included in this presentation will be a large group of accent plants of all types and sizes. This is a ground breaking event for the Northwest.

Thank you to Greg Brendan and Dennis Vojtilla for their informative program at the March meeting on selecting raw material and what to do next. I hope this will help you when you are shopping for new potential to add to your collection.

Look for my monthly meeting reminder email toward the end of the month with more details and information. See you on the 28th.

*Steve Leaming*, VP Programs

## How to Renew Library Materials

If you have library materials checked out and will not be at the meeting when they are due to be returned, you can renew them. Simply call or email Jan Hettick at 503-504-7760 or [jan-hettick@comcast.net](mailto:jan-hettick@comcast.net) BEFORE THE DUE DATE and tell her you want to renew your items. That's all it takes. Just say "renew" and you are good to go!

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED 4/25/2015

There are still a few spaces available on the Pacific Bonsai Museum work party Saturday, April 25th. Join us at the Bonsai Museum (Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection) for a close look at the bonsai exhibit and a free critique of one of your trees by Aarin Packard, the Museum's new curator. The only cost is a few hours of your time.

Our primary responsibility is the entry path and grounds surrounding the exhibit trees - pulling weeds, trimming landscape plants and the like. We bring our own favorite gardening tools, such as loppers, pruning shears, buckets, gloves, knee pads, hat, rain gear and/or sun screen. Also bring a lunch, as there is nowhere close to buy one.

For car pooling we meet in the north parking lot at Elmer's Restaurant by Delta Park (Exit 306b) at 7:15 AM. We're usually home by 7:30-ish. For more information, call Jan Hettick, 503-504-7760, or email at [janhettick@comcast.net](mailto:janhettick@comcast.net). Hope you can help us out!

*Jan*

## Oregon Shohin Kai

The next meeting of the Oregon Shohin Kai will be **Saturday, May 2, 2015**. We meet from 10am to 2pm in the Oregon Grape Room at the Milwaukie Center. Lee Cheatle will present a short program on styling, and then we will work on our trees. Bring several of your trees for ideas on refinement and bring your raw stock to assess its future. Watch for a detailed email the week before the meeting. If you have questions, contact Jan Hettick, [janhettick@comcast.net](mailto:janhettick@comcast.net) or 503-504-7760.

*Jan*



Bird's Nest Spruce  
*Picea abies*  
'Nidiformis'  
Height 29"  
Width 48"  
**Bonsai Mirai**

# Spring Show 2015

The 2015 Spring Show at the Japanese Gardens will take place on May 23rd and 24th. As this falls on Memorial Day weekend, it's already highlighted on your calendar. Are you ready to see some really stupendous bonsai? I certainly am and have a few trees being groomed as we speak. If you have been working on your trees too, be sure to send me a note with photos of your efforts so that we can get you in the show. And you may even get a free critique of your tree by our guest artist, Matt Reel. More on that later.

All of the particulars of the show will remain pretty much the same as the last few years, but here is a quick rundown. Our space is the same as always - that means limited - so get your trees in early. This is nearly as late in the year as we have shown, so I would expect some of those azaleas to be coming into bloom as well as others.

We will be setting up on Friday, the 22nd, from morning through the afternoon. We'll need a great crew of volunteers for that. During the weekend, we will have exhibit tours conducted by members three times daily and continuous demos on the back deck - that all reads as volunteers to me! If you have never worked on your bonsai amongst other tree huggers, along with the gathering crowds of garden visitors, you have really missed out. We will also need tree sitters to watch over the exhibit during the weekend. If you would like to volunteer, contact Pat Foldi at patfoldi@comcast.net, or (503) 635-7137

Saturday evening will feature our usual Critique with a very special guest star, returning native son, Matt Reel. Be sure to be there for an evening full of food, fun, and good spirits as Matt shares some of his bonsai knowledge gleaned from almost eight years in Japan. The exhibit will close promptly at 6:00 pm and our finger food and dessert potluck starts immediately on the back deck. Be sure to bring treats and any serving utensils that you may require a few minutes early to set up. The 90 minute critique will begin at 7:00. You may bring alcoholic beverages, but nothing that will stain, like red wine. The club will be supplying other beverages. This is also the time that we vote for various awards on the bonsai. Here is the line up: Best Conifer, Best Deciduous, Best Shohin, Best Accent Plant, Best Saikei. Tickets are \$15 and will be available at the next two meetings and at the door. Attendance will be limited to 50 people, so be sure to get your tickets early.

*Scott Elser* – bonsaielser@gmail.com

## Mentorship 2015 Monthly Schedule (forecasted)

Please mark your calendars

April Sun 19 <sup>th</sup>	May Sun 17 <sup>th</sup>	June Sun 14 <sup>th</sup>
July Sun 19 <sup>th</sup>	Aug Sun 16 <sup>th</sup>	Sept Sun 13 <sup>th</sup>
Oct Sun 11 <sup>th</sup>	Nov Sun 15 <sup>th</sup>	Dec Sun 13 <sup>th</sup>

We meet from 10am to 1pm, at the Milwaukie Center, just as we have been. Access to the space starts at 9:30am. Cleanup is from 1pm to 1:30pm.

*See*

## 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 at [janhettick@comcast.net](mailto:janhettick@comcast.net) 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.

Japanese Garden assistance: we will need two 6' tables and 6 chairs plus tables for other volunteers doing demonstrations. A trash receptacle; usually available.

Additional information: Mentor chair will also be recruiting mentors to do tree sitting for Saturday and Sunday as well as to assist with the take down of the exhibit. This information will be communicated to either Scott Elser and/or his appointed recruiter for the show.

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.

## ***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 in May edition, however, 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](#).

# Scott's BRANCH TIPS

*BONSAI TECHNIQUE & PHILOSOPHY*

## Bonsai From the Ground Up

For quite awhile now my wife and I have been searching for a new home. Unfortunately, the search is not over yet, but it became imperative that I dig up and pot all of the trees that I have been growing in the ground for a good ten years now. This movement from ground to pot actually started several years ago with a *Styrax* and a few Crabapples. Now that the process has been accelerated by the impending move, the experience has been quite enlightening. I thought that it would be a great time to share some of the triumphs and travails while they are fresh in my mind. I have had a few requests to talk about growing trees in the ground, so, here ya go.

First of all, growing bonsai from scratch is a privilege. Living in this great country where you can own a piece of land, however small, and a great state like Oregon where trees grow like weeds is awesome. My bonsai hobby (if you can still call it that) started out on an apartment balcony in Lake Grove. A pretty small space, but I had it good. I was on a second story slab of concrete where bugs and birds were a minor concern and security was impeccable - ever try scaling T-111 siding?

But within a few years I had outgrown the space and bonsai was the main reason to leave the ease of an apartment and actually buy a home. The point that I am trying to make is that growing in the ground is not a possibility for everyone. Even at my first house, which had a third of an acre, I didn't grow any bonsai in the ground. Wasted time and space.

Then, shortly after I moved into the current home, I did the darndest thing and went to study bonsai with Boon Manakitivipart. Through Boon I learned to appreciate deciduous bonsai much more. So much that I began to increase my collection of those wonderful trees. That's about the time that importation of trees from Japan began to be curtailed and sources for great material were drying up. I realized that the only way that I was going to have any good deciduous trees would be to grow them myself. Now I want to stop and state right here that **NOTHING** beats the quality of growing trees in pots. The control that you have on shape, health, roots, trunks, branches, etc... is superior. But you can also do a fantastic job scrubbing your bathroom floor with a toothbrush. It is all a matter of time and perspective. I wanted to halve my time and was willing to sacrifice some of that control, especially since I was after larger trees.

It was about this same time that I discovered Oregon Bonsai and Randy Knight. Randy had been growing trees on a very large scale and I was permitted to purchase and dig a few from his field. He had started out growing his trees on ceramic tiles, which worked very well at creating a flat root pad. This was my first experience dealing with field grown trees. But as most of you know, I like bigger trees, so after my acquisitions were dug, cleaned, top pruned and root pruned, they went straight back into the ground. There were several crabapples and some quince.

I built some raised growing beds into the gentle slope of my back yard and away we went.

Over the years, I added to that initial planting from several sources. I planted trees that had been developed in pots for several years with nice spreading root bases, and I also purchased regular landscape material in one to five gallon pots. Some were collected from other yards and there were even volunteers that I just started training into bonsai. I added many different species, including: several magnolias, crepe myrtles, beeches, stewartias, Japanese maples, beauty-berries, cherries, sweetgums, alders, native crabapples, Indian plum, etc.... As you can see by the list, most of these would really be hard to come by. I didn't grow any conifers. It is way too easy, albeit, expensive, to obtain hundred-year old specimens than to try and grow them myself.

From the start I knew that the goal was to grow trunks and I didn't really care about branching in particular. I was after volume. And I knew that to do that I must really let things grow. By the way, this runs true, whether you are growing shohin or huge behemoths.

Every year I identified a leader for that year's growth – the direction that I wanted the trunk to grow. Sometimes I would even wire up a branch into position, or just raise it with a rebar stake and a piece of wire. Using the later method, it didn't matter if the wire cut in, because I was tying up high, into the part of the tree would never be used in the final product. Applying wire while the tree is in the ground is difficult, and invariably it will start cutting into the tree because it is growing so fast. But it was necessary to get new leaders in some cases.

The trees that I had the most success with were ones that already had some shape going into the ground that I could build on. Material with nicely compact and sinuous curves and gentle movement. But you have to be sure to scale your movement to the final size of the tree. Side to side movement of a few inches that seems drastic when the tree is a half-inch in diameter is almost totally gone when the tree reaches 4 inches in diameter. There are no bonsai that look good with a 6 inch straight section. This is really common with trees purchased from landscaping stock. We need curves. Better to bite the bullet and make whatever cut is necessary and let it regrow. This is much easier and palatable in the ground. Most of my pruning occurred in late winter and early spring where I could really evaluate what was going on.

Secondary pruning, especially when I needed back budding took place at various times in the growing season. May would always be my best bet for cutting back.

The trees put on incredible growth. Some species could add 6-8 feet a year to their height. At most, I let them grow two years without cutting them back. The first year of free growth they would really put on height, but that second year, they really thickened up, with many side branches. Many simply grew too fast and I had to whack them every year – that would be the alders. Boy, can they grow fast. In contrast, the stewartias and styrax grew fairly slowly, both in height and girth.

Every time that I pruned the trunk I used cut paste on the wounds. I found that it always has worked the best for my cuts. I also found that some trees heal over very easily and some do not, even in the ground. So I came up with my general rule that any sacrifice branch can grow to a maximum of half an inch diameter before I need to cut it off. I was after quality and anything bigger than that left too big of a scar to heal. The crabapples growing in the ground simply would not heal large wounds for me, but the slow growing stewartias and crepe myrtles healed over magically. So you always have to know your species.

The great advantage to growing in the ground is that there doesn't have to be a dormant season during the summer. I made sure that the ground stayed moist even during hot spells and

found that trees could power right through the heat. I tossed my old fertilizer from the pots onto the growing beds and added other fertilizer as supplements and got some astounding growth.

The trees went into the ground at various times of the year, in different years, and in different sizes, so not much consistency there. At first, I think, I dug up some of the trees after a year or two, then root pruned and replanted them, using 12 inch ceramic tiles under each, or sometimes plywood. As I mentioned earlier, I had already started to dig some of my treasure and put them into pots several years ago, and even sold a few. Knowing of my impending move, I went through all of them last year and used a shovel to cut a ring around them in the ground, to prune the roots and get them ready for this year's Herculean task. I even had to take an axe to the alders, since the roots were well over an inch in diameter. I also dug up several trees and moved them to make room for others. Plus, I dug the two crepe myrtles, which I had planted in the front yard to enjoy, and moved them to the growing beds. But they too, were always destined for bonsai glory, so they had been planted in the front yard WITH the requisite tiles under them. It worked well, because they had not grown much due to too much shade.

So the Forsythia that I had moved last year and dug first this spring came up with a massive base and a very nice root pad. Sweet success. But then I began to dig the trees that had been in the ground longer. The ones that I had supposedly root pruned several times with a shovel over the years. With the trees growing on tiles, I got some surprises. The tile always did its job and developed flat root systems. But sometimes the roots would grow over the edge of the tile, then down (That's a good reason to use a big tile) or they were just planted overall too deep and I got more roots than I thought that I would. But at this point, I still highly recommend it. But I found that more often than not, I hadn't actually gotten a tile under the tree. More than that, the shovel had either failed to prune the roots, because my ringing diameter was too large – not really likely, or the roots simply headed for China. The result were root pads that sometimes resembled giant squid with long root tentacles hanging down. That means that I had to cut all of those off to get them into a pot. Mostly it meant a lot of hard work. So remember when I said it was my intention to dig them up every two years to root prune them? It obviously did not happen. I sometimes ended up with roots almost two inches in diameter and totally useless for bonsai. The one really great thing is that they were all very strong and vigorous. After all the hacking, digging, and cutting back, they all seem to be making it. You will be able to see some of the results on native trees at this month's program.

So here are some observations and sort of a checklist of lessons learned.

1. Ground growing requires just as much attention as growing in pots. For great results, you still have to water, prune, monitor, etc...
2. Growing in the ground is for developing trunks only. You might be able to use some of the branches later, but don't count on it if you are going for size.
3. You can grow too fast. You must create movement in the trunk, either through successive pruning, or wiring, or starting with a pre-developed shape. And this movement must have the final size in mind.
4. You must know your species, just as if you were growing in a pot. Know how it will react to pruning, how it will back bud, and how it will heal scars.

5. You must prune the roots at least every two-three years. Otherwise, you are creating bulk that will just be a problem and you are not making the shallow root pad you would like. You really need to keep encouraging the division of roots in to many fine ones instead of thick and heavy ones.
6. Watering is still critical. Planting on tiles means that the roots must go sideways to find water and more resources. It also means that the tree is less stable until it dives over the edge of the tile.
7. Letting trees grow wild means that they need more room. Mine got really crowded and started to shade each other with their 6 foot tops. That meant that interior branches started to fade, so I had to prune trees earlier than planned.
8. Prune hard early in May so that trees can re-grow before the heat of July and August, or branches and trunks may burn.

*Scott*



Bumper sticker adorning Alan Taft's truck.

### **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.

**Portland Rose Society Fertilizer** is available for delivery at the April 28 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 at [bhettickco@comcast.net](mailto:bhettickco@comcast.net) or 503-936-5629.

# FERTILIZATION

Spring has sprung (and rather early this year)! If your trees are like mine, the pines and junipers never really went dormant, and the deciduous trees began pushing bud in mid January. That meant that repotting was being completed by mid February and already plants need fertilizing. (If your tree has been repotted recently, be sure to wait at least six (6) weeks before you fertilize the first time.) So, as I was reviewing my own fertilization plans for this year, I thought a general review of the topic might be helpful.

Understanding **N-P-K** (Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potash [Potassium]) ratings on fertilizer packages (both chemical and organic) and their individual and complementary impact on plant growth is essential in determining how, when and in what amounts to use fertilizer on your lawn, garden and particularly for the care and maintenance of your Bonsai trees.

**N** Stands for Nitrogen. Nitrogen helps make plants greener, and helps them grow faster. Nitrogen can be depleted over time by the plants using it up, or by being washed away.

**P** Stands for Phosphorus. Phosphorus is good for root growth, disease resistance, seed and fruit growth, and for blooming and flowering.

**K** Stands for Potash (or Potassium). Potash helps with increasing root growth, with drought resistance and with disease resistance. (So why is it **K**? Because it is derived from Neo-Latin kalium.) Originally Potash came from ashes of plants hence the name. Potassium ions are necessary for the function of all living cells.

Chemical and Organic fertilizers show their nutrient content with three (3) bold numbers which are required by law to appear on the label of every package of fertilizer. Each number represents the percentage (by weight) of N, P, and K present in that particular fertilizer. Therefore a fertilizer label showing the numbers 10 - 10 - 10 would have equal percentages of Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potash (Potassium) and would be considered a balanced fertilizer. A label rating of 24 - 8 - 4 would be considered a high nitrogen fertilizer; one with a label showing 18 - 46 - 0 would be a high Phosphorus fertilizer; and one with a label showing 6 - 12 - 18 would be a high Potash (Potassium) fertilizer. **N, P, K** are not the only elements present in fertilizer packages, and are not the only elements necessary to plant health and development. Elements such as carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, sulfur, magnesium, iron, copper, cobalt, sodium, boron, molybdenum, zinc and other **TRACE ELEMENTS** that are also essential to healthy plant growth are present in some combination and amount in all chemical and organic fertilizer mixes.

## So what do they do?

**NITROGEN** provides the plant with the ability to produce more chlorophyll, which in turn allows the plant to grow quickly. With each application of **NITROGEN** plants will grow taller, bushier and develop and maintain a darker green color.

**PHOSPHORUS** aids in root development and increases flowering ability. High **PHOSPHORUS content** fertilizers are marketed under such labels as "MORBLOOM", "BLOOM BOOSTER" and "BLOOM BUSTER."

**POTASSIUM** has many functions in plant development. It guards plants against disease; aids in drought protection and cold tolerance; aids in improving root development and helps in the process of photosynthesis.

For those of you who are "Left Brainers", you will notice that the percentages of the N - P - K elements and the percentages of trace elements do not equal 100 percent. That is because there are filler products used in the mixes to provide for even distribution of the elements during the application process.

## **How to use them.**

The various formulations of fertilizers will provide the plant with different resources throughout the growing cycle and you should select from the various formulas depending on your specific goals and objectives for the tree you are working on and the season of the year. In the early spring when your plants are first budding out, a higher **NITROGEN (15 - 10 - 10)** application may be appropriate, followed by a **BALANCED** feeding regiment throughout the remainder of the growing season (**10 - 10 - 10**) and in the fall and early winter a feeding application of high **PHOSPHORUS and POTASSIUM (MORBLOOM) (0 - 10 - 10)** to help prepare the roots and branches of the tree for the cold winter weather.

So whether you are using organic cake fertilizer, such as the ones BSOP makes (which is approximately a 6-6-6 application), powdered mixes such as **Miracle Grow 20-20-20**, fish emulsion/ kelp meal (2-3-1), or other products, alone or in combination always be aware of the **N-P-K** values, your goals and objectives for the tree, the tree's specific needs and the season of the year.

My personal regiment, from late January until the end of March, is to use 20-20-20 mixed at 1/4 strength combined with fish emulsion/kelp meal at the manufacture's recommended rate and applied at 14 day intervals.

For April through May, I used 20-20-20 mixed at 1/2 strength combined with fish emulsion/ kelp meal at the manufacture's recommended rate and applied at 14 day intervals.

For June through the end of September, I used **POO BALLS** in conjunction with 20-20-20 mixed at 1/2 strength combined with fish emulsion/kelp meal at the manufacture's recommended rate and applied at 14 day intervals.

Starting in October, I remove the last of the **POO BALLS** , and through the middle of December, I use 0-10-10 (**MOREBLOOM**) mixed at the recommended rate and applied every 14 days.

**CAUTION:** Always be careful to follow the package directions whenever you are mixing fertilizer or sprays for insects or diseases for application to your trees. I personally always mix fertilizers at one-half of the manufacturer's recommended strength. Remember, most of these products are formulated for use in the general plant environment in the ground and garden. Bonsai are growing in small pots, with limited amounts of soil and can be easily burned or damaged by applications of fertilizer and sprays which are too strong or concentrated.

Have a great Bonsai growing season.

***Keith Wingfield***

## 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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Please call Rose with any questions at 541 829 1859

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Many varieties of satsuki whips

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To contact us, please call or email

Chris & Lisa Kirk •

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[www.tfarms.com](http://www.tfarms.com)

Website at [www.telfarms.com](http://www.telfarms.com)

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!

### **Board of Directors**

President: Lee Cheatle 503 312-4921 [leecheatle@msn.com](mailto:leecheatle@msn.com)

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### **Committee Heads**

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Hospitality: