



# the **TREE LINE**

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

November 2013

## Upcoming Events

- Nov 17 **Sunday** 1:30-5pm **Mentorship Meeting** St. Paul room, St. Philip Neri  
Nov 26 7-9pm **BSOP Monthly Meeting** St. Philip Neri 2408 SE 16th Ave  
Dec 14 9am - 1pm **OSK Max's Fanno Creek Brew Pub, Tigard**  
Dec 7 **BSOP Holiday Party & Auction** Oaks Park Pavilion, 7805 SE Oaks  
Park Way, Portland, OR 97202  
Oct 18 - 21, 2014 Intl Bonsai Art & Culture Biennale, Yokyakarta, Indonesia

## New Leadership in Key Programs

I am very happy to announce that two important BSOP programs will continue to prosper under new leadership. Lee Cheatle, one of our most inspiring and outgoing members has accepted the role of Mentorship Program Chair. Lee has a history with the program. Lee, Anne Spencer and Robert Guitron were the founders of the program several years ago. Lee's leadership will take Mentorship to new heights. The program will continue to make our entire organization stronger as we help each other improve knowledge and skills. Look for an updated schedule soon.

Another major leadership change has come to our Heritage Program. Bob Laws, who launched and steadfastly maintained this necessary service, has passed the torch to Manny Tavan. Manny has been a member of BSOP for over a decade. In his gracious acceptance of his new role, he acknowledged having learned much since joining the organization and thought it was time to give something back. I am looking forward to seeing Manny's energy at work when our members need his help.

Thanks to both Lee and Manny for your commitment to BSOP. Both of these programs have a crew of volunteers who have offered to assist our new leaders. We can look forward to new energy, new ideas and measurable results.

Still unfilled is the leadership role for our Outreach Program. This one requires good people skills in coordinating talks, demonstrations and generally helping to keep our group visible. Most requests for outreach come through our website and are passed along to the chair for evaluation and planning. I suspect we will see an increase in requests in the coming year. Let me know if you are interested in helping or leading this program.

*Chas Martin*

# On Learning Bonsai

One really fascinating and great thing about bonsai is that when you become a student of the art, you may find that you are part of a direct lineage going back many generations. Here's what I mean: When you learn directly from someone who teaches you, you learn techniques and approaches that were handed down from master to student, who became a master, who then taught a student, who in turn became a master, and so on until you learned that technique yourself.

Here in Portland, we are rather fortunate to have several lineages available to us: Michael Hagedorn, who teaches here in town, apprenticed with Shinji Suzuki, one of Japan's most pre-eminent masters, who in turn learned from Motosuke Hamano. Mr. Hamano also taught Masahiko Kimura, who taught Ryan Neil, who teaches here in town from his remarkable bonsai garden, Bonsai Mirai. Some members of our club have studied with Boon Manakitivipart, who studied in Japan with Kihachiro Kamiya. Word has it that Matt Reel, another Suzuki student, will take up residence in Portland early next year. So that will make three bonsai teachers going back to Suzuki or Kimura, then Hamano, and if you learned anything last month from Scott Elser, you have a connection to Kamiya. And their teachers before them. Cool, huh?

All of which brings me to our November meeting. We will be honored to have Ted Matson, from Southern California, for a "bring your own tree" critique session. Before I get into what that's about, the tie-in is that Ted Matson was my first bonsai teacher when I initially did bonsai as a Los Angeleno in the 1990s. Although I had to let go of my bonsai collection at one point (only to take it up again when I moved to Portland in '07), it was under Ted's tutelage that I first got serious about it. Ted, by the way, was a member of Nampu Kai, John Naka's study group. And John Naka is known somewhat as the grandfather of American Bonsai. So come to our meeting on November 26 and get a little bit of American bonsai lineage in your learning!

**About the Tuesday night meeting:** The "bring your own tree" critique session format works like this: First, don't think of it as bringing your tree to be criticized, so much as critically evaluated. Do you have a tree that needs an expert opinion? The tree should be somewhat developed as opposed to raw stock, and should be one that you have questions about where to take it. Pondering the correct front or apex? Puzzled whether to keep, cut, or jin a branch? Which pot works better for this tree? Bring one or two trees that fit this criteria and Ted will get to as many of them as he can. If you attended 2012's PNBCA convention in Vancouver and saw the Western Hemlock he styled, you know that Ted is an engaging teacher with a great eye for bonsai.

**About the Wednesday morning workshop:** Bring a tree or two to work on with Ted. Make sure you have your own tools and wire. Deciduous, shohin, conifers--Ted will help you out! The workshop goes from 9-noon and costs \$40. To reserve your seat, send a check payable to BSOP, care of Al Polito, 2506 N Ainsworth St., Portland, OR 97217. **IMPORTANT:** With your check, please include your full name, phone number, and email address. Workshop will be limited to eight participants, and silent observers may attend for \$5. Same check information applies. The first eight payments received will attend; others will be placed on a waiting list. Questions? Call Al at [503.708.9394](tel:503.708.9394).

Enjoy the fall, and see you November 26!

*Al*

## Deck the Halls on December 7!

The Bonsai Society of Portland is thrilled to announce our 2013 Annual Holiday Party and Auction! This year's event will take place at Oaks Park Pavilion and will begin at 6 p.m. and finish up around 9 . This year's event promises to be extra festive!

*Here's why you should come:*

Live jazz! The local jazz duo, 2JazzGuitars, will be playing a set of instrumental holiday jazz to tap your feet to!

Bid on great silent and oral auction trees and get the year's best deals on established bonsai trees, pots, tools, and more!

See your bonsai buddies, eat delicious food! (There will also be gluten-free and probably vegan options.)

Enjoy a fun-filled raffle

It's one heck of a party for just \$20 per ticket. They'll be for sale at the November meeting.

If you have trees to auction, there's a 5-tree limit per *single* or *family* membership. (That means your car has no more than five trees in it!) Arrive between 5:15 and 5:30 to register your trees; typically the more established trees will end up in the oral auction. Note that this event is exclusively for Bonsai Society members and their guests; others may attend if they purchase a membership first.

So put on your most obnoxious red and green sweater, and join the fun!

**Where:** Oaks Park Pavilion, 7805 SE Oaks Park Way, Portland, OR 97202

**When:** December 7, 6 p.m.; 5:15-5:30 to put trees in the auction

**How much:** Just \$20 for a two-entree meal plus dessert! (No-host bar)

**Don't worry:** Santa has other plans that night and will not be making an appearance. Anyone resembling St. Nick is *not* the real Santa.

See you there!



Rocky Mountains  
Limber Pine  
Bonsai Mirai

# November Mentorship Program

**Sunday November 17, 2013 Phillip St. Neri Parish - 1:30 to 5:30pm**

To start with, I want to thank Keith Wingfield for raising the bar some more notches on our mentorship programs. Very much appreciated. Keith and I have met and he has passed on some valuable information.

Second, I want to thank all of you who have said you will be willing to share the task of mentoring. The more varied our teaching staff the more interest we will attract.

Third, I want everyone to know, that one of my first priorities, is to locate and groom someone to take over in a year or two with the mentorship. So anyone who feels they want to accept my offer, please contact me.

November's subject will be "Winterization" all the things we need to do to prepare our trees for the upcoming cold, wet and dark. Maybe not the most glamorous of bonsai subjects but when you consider that bonsai priority one is "healthy vibrant trees" it may change your perspective. We will have handouts to help you to remember the do's and do not's.

Please bring trees that you want help on for both winterization practices as well as trees for styling tips, wiring or any other reason.

Last, I am going to be meeting with several of our mentor mentors to review the best way to continue to improve our mentorship meetings. But, I also want to tap into the members in general to get their opinions. Please feel free to contact me at 503-312-4921 or email me at [leecheatle@msn.com](mailto:leecheatle@msn.com) with any thoughts you have.

Please be on the lookout for an upcoming agenda for future mentorship meetings.

Healthy Trees to All,

*Lee*



Western Juniper  
Bonsai Mirai

# Oregon Shohin Kai

What a great meeting we had on November 2nd! Lee Cheatle lead a record number of members in a discussion about larches. Lee says every bonsai hobbyist should have one or more of these deciduous conifers in their collection so they can enjoy great season changes. Larches are readily available in nurseries, and are also easy to collect. Numerous members brought larches, some shohin and some much larger, many in their wonderful fall color. Thank you, Lee, for a very entertaining few hours.

Although I announced earlier there would be no meeting in December because of a conflict with the BSOP Holiday Party, the group voted to have a meeting on the **SECOND SATURDAY**. So, **the next meeting of the Oregon Shohin Kai will be December, 14, 2013, 9AM to 1PM**. Note also the time change – we need to meet an hour earlier to avoid another group at our meeting facility.

The main focus of the December meeting will be wiring. Dennis Vojtilla has agreed to bring in some of his grapes, and to help us perfect our wiring technique. This material is perfect for serious wiring practice, and the program will be a great opportunity to learn. Feel free, though, to bring whatever type or size of tree(s) you want to work on or that needs your attention.

The meeting is again scheduled for Max's Fanno Creek Brew Pub. Remember the time change; come at 9:00 AM. Directions to Max's may be found on the website, or will be provided with a later email. Be aware that light is a little weak in Max's meeting room, so bring a light or lamp of some kind if you wish.

If you have any questions, contact Jan Hettick at [janhettick@comcast.net](mailto:janhettick@comcast.net) or 503-504-7760.

*Jan*

## 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 e mail Jan Hettick at 503-504-7760 or [janhettick@comcast.net](mailto:janhettick@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!

## NOTICE

### **All BSOP Members Time To Pay Membership Dues**

Membership renewal – if you received a renewal notice please return it as soon as possible. We would like to publish the new roster in January 2014. Thank you, Margie Kinoshita, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Membership.

## NOTICE

### **Bamboo Canes For Sale 100% Discount for BSOP Members Call 503 704 3891**

Cane length 5' - 20'

Cane diameter <math><1/2''</math> - 2''

Most are green, but some black canes. Cut in October

## BSOP Monthly Program October 2013

Here are half of the results from our October meeting, a co-demonstration with Ryan Neil and myself. Both of us styled a Douglas Fir - Ryan's was collected in Colorado, and I collected mine on the Oregon coast. Consequently they are slightly different varieties.

The photos below give you a good idea of where my tree is headed for now. In the future, I plan on eliminating quite a bit of the lowest foliage as upper portions develop. There may also be some more carving/dead wood in the middle of the trunk as well as shortening of the jin as the character of the tree starts to come out. The tree is now back in it's usual place on the bench, with the pot propped up in the position you see here. A few of the branches got bumped out of place on the way home and I didn't get them back before a quick photo in nice October weather.

*Scott Elser*





# Scott's Tips

This month we are bringing a new, regular series to the Treeline. I will be presenting a bonsai tip every month to help improve your bonsai experience. The tips may be on styling or horticulture, long or short, pictures or no. But hopefully, all will be useful. Here's to more fun with bonsai.

## Flow

By far the number one challenge we have when setting up one of our shows at the Japanese Gardens is one of flow. Does the movement of an individual tree flow to the left or the right? What does this mean and why is it important? Flow is a term to describe the overall direction that the tree moves toward. In other words, which direction does it lead your eye to? In a normal display, the flow leads you naturally to the accent plant, and that planting points your eyes back up to the tree. In a shohin display with multiple trees, the flow leads you from one tree to another on the stand.

There are several elements that contribute to flow; trunk movement and direction, main branch position, direction of crown, and overall foliage mass. Where we run into trouble is when we have conflicting elements within the design of the tree. Frequently, the main branch goes in one direction, and the top goes in another. This is the most fundamental rule – The apex must move in the same direction as the main branch. The trunk may or may not move the same way, but these two elements – the main branch and top - must agree. The movement can be very subtle, but you can still spot it in balanced tree styles like formal upright and broom.

Obviously, the main factor contributing to movement is the trunk. A slanting trunk is pretty obvious, but most of our trees fall into the informal upright category, where they start one direction and switch to another. The other factor is foliage mass. Where this is located and how strong it is can sway an otherwise balanced tree.

I encourage you to take a look at each tree in your collection and give it a good evaluation to see which direction it's moving in, and more importantly, that all the factors agree and are in balance. Doing so will improve each tree and make it feel much more harmonious. We don't have enough space here to talk about how to make corrections; we will have to leave that for another time. Have fun with your trees.

**Scott**



Shimpaku Juniper  
'Itoigawa'  
Bonsai Boon

Cork Bark  
Japanese Black Pine  
Bonsai Boon





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White pine Crataegus Bonsai



Picea glauca var. albertiana 'Conica'/Alberta  
Tallest tree 19", Planted Sept 2006, bonsai4me

## 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

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Welcome to the Village



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

St. Phillip Neri Parish  
2408 SE 16th Avenue, Portland OR  
Northeast corner of SE Division and 16th Avenue  
Visitors are always welcome!

**Board of Directors**

President: Chas Martin 503 459-1009 [Chas.Martin@InnovativEye.com](mailto:Chas.Martin@InnovativEye.com)

Past President: Eileen Knox 503 466-2964 [eileenknox@frontier.com](mailto:eileenknox@frontier.com)

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VP-Membership: Margie Kinoshita [youngkinoshita@msn.com](mailto:youngkinoshita@msn.com)

Treasurer: Robert Wofford 503 304-0996 [wofford9694@comcast.net](mailto:wofford9694@comcast.net)

Secretary: Karen VunKannon [kvunkannon@gmail.com](mailto:kvunkannon@gmail.com)

**Committee Heads**

Librarian: Barbara Devitt 503 764-8242 [bbd.jcgroup@yahoo.com](mailto:bbd.jcgroup@yahoo.com)

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

Shohin Kai: Jan Hettick 503 540-7760 [janhettick@comcast.net](mailto:janhettick@comcast.net)

Newsletter: Peter Pelofske 503 704-3891 [pelofskepj@juno.com](mailto:pelofskepj@juno.com)

Webmaster: Chas Martin 503 459-1009

[Chas.Martin@innovativeeye.com](mailto:Chas.Martin@innovativeeye.com)

Club Email: Arlene Sigourney 503 667-0148 [asigourney@aol.com](mailto:asigourney@aol.com)

Heritage Group: Manny Tavan 503 869-0872 [etavan@gmail.com](mailto:etavan@gmail.com)