



# the **TREE LINE**

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

June 2013

## Upcoming Events

- June 15 2-5pm **Mentorship Meeting** *Poo Balls*, Scott Tice residence  
June 20 6:30-8:30pm **Penjing Discussion Group** Paula Bentley-Mathews residence  
June 25 7-9pm **BSOP Meeting** St. Philip Neri 2408 SE 16th Ave  
July 13 **Multi-club Potluck** Wee Tree Farm 23642 Pearson Place, Philomath  
July 2-28 Dennis Vojtilla trees at Pacific Rim Bonsai Federal Way, WA  
July 30-Sept 1 Robert Laws trees at Pacific Rim Bonsai Federal Way, WA  
August 17 Noon **BSOP Summer Picnic** *daybreak gardens* 25321 NE 72nd Avenue, Battle Ground, WA  
Sept 21 2-5pm **Mentorship Meeting** St. Philip Neri 2408 SE 16th Ave

June 25 7-9pm BSOP Meeting,

## Happy Solstice, Bonsai Friends !

As the longest day of the year (June 21) approaches, all that new growth from our awesome spring is hardening off and it's time to do some pruning. And in my case, unwiring. Or is that dewiring? Yes, maples (Vine) were the culprit. Those guys sneak up on you fast.

I'm excited about our June meeting. John "JT" Thompson is coming up from San Jose, CA, to do a demo for us. A consummate bonsai expert, John is known for his work with oak trees, among other species, and the meeting promises to be an interesting one.

Special thanks to Peter for sharing his photos with us at our May meeting. I don't know about you but I had a great time at the whack-n-chat and came home with some cool loot: a beautiful display stand and a pile of old bonsai magazines (mostly "Bonsai in California") to idly browse at. And a neat pot.

As it so happens, this "loot" from the silent auction actually presents a few cases for reflection on what's great about our club.

**The display stand:** I got this display stand because I really liked it and because it goes well with a few of my trees. But in a real sense, it's almost club property. Those of us who collect

display stands typically march them out perhaps once per year for the spring show at the Japanese Garden. And do you know what we do with them? We share them. My tree on your stand. My stand for her tree. Her accent plant with his tree, and so on. More than any other art form I'm aware of, bonsai is a group effort--not just at show time but also during the life of a tree as it is influenced by various teachers and other valued opinions, and as it passes from owner to owner.

**Old bonsai magazines:** When I first took up bonsai in the late 80s/early 90s in Los Angeles, I got my hands on a few "Bonsai in California" magazines put out by the California Bonsai Society. As I would page through these magazines over and over again, I would gawk admirably at the work of the California Bonsai Society, including John Naka, Marybel Balendonck, Roy Nagotoshi, Jim Barrett, Mas Moriguchi and others. Indeed, there were many fine trees in there, especially California junipers. And now I am acutely aware that if we were to put out a book of our own bonsai trees as shown in the past few years' shows at the Japanese Garden, beautifully photographed on display tables, our trees would generally surpass the ones from those magazines in quality. To be fair, both in California and here in the Pacific Northwest, we've all taken it up a few notches with top teachers and bonsai material becoming available to anyone who's fairly serious about bonsai. We've all come a long way during the past 25 years or so.

I still love looking at those California bonsai books. I would love to see a magazine of trees from the Pacific Northwest Bonsai Association. I'm waiting for some of the Rochester bonsai show books to be available in the library so I can see some of the best American trees from more recent years. If you want your fix of fine West Coast bonsai right now, do an Internet search for Bay Island Bonsai and see what those folks are up to. Some great work is coming out of Northern California.

Ours is a top-notch club with great members who love to contribute their energy to the group and to the art. Our member survey reveals that many if not most of us are serious about taking our trees to the next level. With our combined resources, we certainly will reach that goal.

*AI*

## 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.

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

# Oregon Shohin Kai

For the June program of Oregon Shohin Kai (OSK) we thank Roger Case, who talked about his experience with cotoneaster and pyracantha. Roger brought several examples of delightful bonsai (one was even a Shohin!), most of which were the result of what he calls "urban collecting". Many of his trees have come from people's yards or were nursery rejects, sources that are often overlooked.

Several members brought their cotoneaster and pyracantha for styling suggestions, and some went home with new material kindly provided by Roger and by Apex Bonsai. OSK will now take our summer break, with no meetings planned for July and August.

**The next meeting of OSK will be the first Saturday in September, the 7<sup>th</sup>**, with a presentation on olives by Greg Brenden. Greg says September is a good month to work on olive bonsai--summer growth is hardening off and we can do some pruning and wiring. He will be bringing in examples of two species he has been working with, *Olea oleaster* and *olea europa*. Both are used extensively as bonsai the world over. Greg has four trees that were collected in California in February and will single one out for its first styling at the September OSK meeting. Work will include branch selection, pruning and sealing large cuts and wiring.

If you don't have an olive yet, maybe you can find one over the summer, or there will be plenty of material from Greg's demo that you can use to strike as cuttings. Greg says olives are very easy to root from cuttings, so bring along a baggie to keep them fresh until you get home. Look for more information in August, or contact Jan Hettick at [janhettick@comcast.net](mailto:janhettick@comcast.net) or 503-504-7760.

*Jan Hettick*

## SUPER SUMMER PICNIC

Come out to the country for a great Portland Bonsai Society picnic! We are gussying up the grounds (spring cleaning) and planning the parking for lots of cars. (At the same time we are dealing with 2 obnoxious yearling deer who consider our property their personal park.) Watch for final details, but at this time we will need to know (1) approximate number of attendees – please contact us, and (2) if you have those nice light-weight tables, as we may need more tables depending on how many people are coming.

See map for directions, and note:

If using I-205 Exit 32, do not go east toward the city of Battle Ground, but take Padden Parkway west to Andresen Road

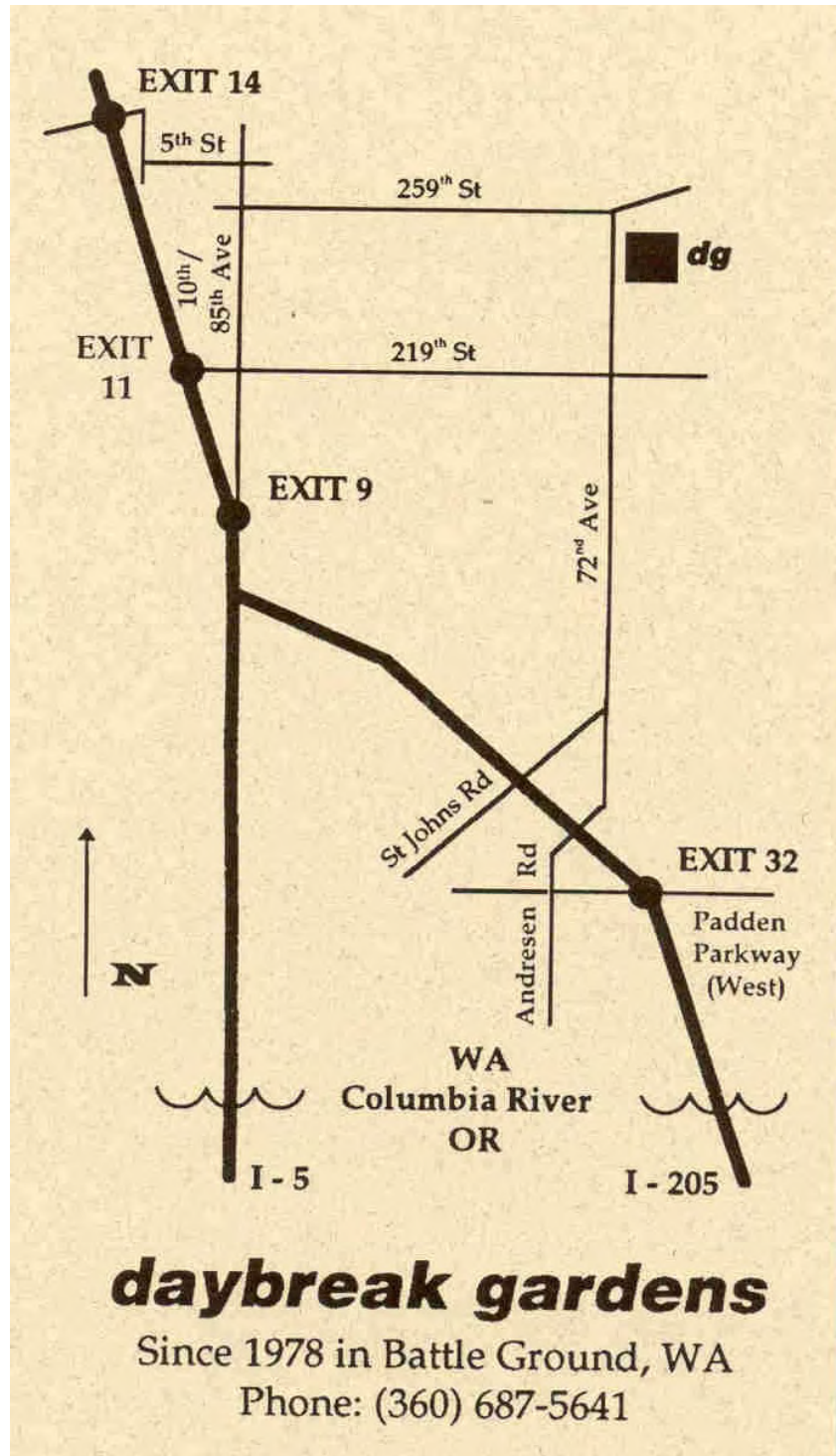
Watch for orange cones at our driveway entrance on the east side of 72nd Avenue

**Date:** Saturday, August 17

**Location:** Dave & Donna Burnett's Farm/Nursery  
25321 NE 72 Avenue  
Battle Ground, WA

**Phone:** 360-687-5641

Map to **daybreak gardens** for Summer Picnic



# 2013 Multi-club Potluck

Come to Wee Tree Farm in Philomath anytime after 10 am on July 13th and bring a dish to share, your own place setting, a tree for the TOP 20 BEST OF THE WORST/BEST CONTEST, and be prepared to have some fun! We'll eat around noon, then you are free to enjoy the contest, walk down to the river, shop, or just sit and chat. The Corvallis Bonsai Society will provide coffee and cold refreshments. We should have plenty of chairs but if you have a favorite and want to haul it please do so.

Our address is 23642 Pearson Place, Philomath. Take Hwy 20 west out of Philomath. Approx 4 miles west of Philomath turn right on Kings Valley Highway #223. Less than a mile turn left of Priest Road. Less than a mile turn left on Pearson Place. Then right at the "T", we are the second driveway on the left.

**THE BEST PART OF THE DAY.....well, maybe after the food.....**

**THE TOP 20 BEST OF THE WORST/BEST CONTEST!**

BRING YOUR TREES!!! Multiple trees can be submitted.

Winners will be selected by a panel of 3 judges.

VALUABLE prizes donated by Wee Tree Farm and Joshua Roth Tools.

All trees must be in a bonsai pot. (Sorry, this contest is too classy for nursery containers!).

**Prizes** will be awarded for spectacular specimens in the following order:

1. Ugliest! (In the tradition of several previous Wee Tree potluck contests).
2. Biggest Tree in Smallest Pot.
3. Least Foliage (1 leaf minimum).
4. Most Unusual Pot.
5. Best Crash Bonsai with Model Cars.
6. Largest Number of Trees in 1 Pot/Slab.
7. Best Flowers (must be present on the tree).
8. Most Unusual Species for a Bonsai.
9. Looks Most Like An Animal.
10. Best Accent Plant (in a pot).
11. Smallest Leaf Size (on a deciduous species).
12. Highest Deadwood/Livewood Ratio (must be a live tree).
13. Nicest Dead Tree (Lucky 13).
14. Smallest Bonsai.
15. Best Wire Scars.
16. Best Weeds in a Bonsai Pot (with tree).
17. Most Heavily Wired Tree.
18. Biggest Leaf Size.
19. Most Twisted/Convuluted Trunk (Contorta Award).
20. Best (non-green) Colored Leaves.

**Bring Your Trees and Have Some Fun!!!**

PS: seriousness not required!

Thank you, *Diane*



Winners from last year

## **Ambassadors of Wisdom**

A necessary step toward downsizing my living space has included reducing my bonsai collection. My goal was to give away 50 trees this spring. They now belong to ten friends who had displayed curiosity about bonsai over the past few years. I organized my trees into lots of 5 or 6, hoping that groups would have a better survival rate than individuals.

These early stage bonsai were given away with some instruction. I also included a promise to consult further when the new owners were ready or when the trees needed rescue.

I had postponed this task for some time, but quickly understood how enjoyable it is to give away my potted creations. The enthusiasm of the recipients made me feel great. Knowing that I will have reason to stay in touch with these folks is an added benefit. In sharing advice, I also realized how much the trees offer their new owners.

In the first workshop I attended years ago, I made a remark about “talking to my trees.” The instructor corrected me, “You don’t talk to the trees. You listen.” That was a revelation. So, part of my instruction has described the importance of observation and listening.

Initially I thought I was acting as an ambassador of bonsai by sharing my trees with others. I soon realized that the trees are the emissaries of instruction. Once again, bonsai has taught me humility.

***Chas Martin***

Portland Rose Society 5-4-4 fertilizer with *mycorrhizae* is available by contacting Bill Hettick at [bhettickco@comcast.net](mailto:bhettickco@comcast.net) or phone at 503-936-5629.

# June Mentorship News

Our May Whack and Chat was a great success. We had 11 members participate and bring in trees for help with diseases, styling, wiring, design, development and "where do I start" questions. Everyone who attended went home with a couple of Roger Case Japanese Maples or Trident Maples. It was fun to watch the lottery selections as everyone was only allowed to choose 1 tree at a time and then the next person selected until everyone had selected one tree. Then we started over until the trees were all claimed. A big thank you to Roger for providing folks with some additional material to begin working with as these trees had been grown with Bonsai training in mind. On to the news of our final Mentorship Program prior to the summer break.

Our June meeting date will be Saturday, June 15, 2013 and will be on fertilizing. This is our big **POO BALLS** program. **WE WILL HAVE THE JUNE MENTORSHIP MEETING ON SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 2013 FROM 2:00 P.M. UNTIL 5:00 P.M. AT THE HOME OF SCOTT TICE. SCOTT'S ADDRESS IS 3236 JOHNSON CREEK BLVD, PORTLAND, OREGON 97222.**

Start gathering your vinyl gloves, cardboard plant flats or other flat containers (like disposable aluminum cookie trays) to carry home your POO Balls, and maybe a face mask. This stuff is pretty loud (smelly) and Scott will have it cooking for a week or so before the program. So it can get pretty ripe. But oh how the trees love it!

**THIS PROGRAM REQUIRES THAT THOSE WHO WISH TO ATTEND SEND AN RSVP SO THAT WE CAN BE SURE TO HAVE ENOUGH MATERIALS PREPARED. RSVP TO KEITH WINGFIELD AT 503-538-6118 OR BY EMAIL AT KEITHWINGFIELD@AOL.COM.** There is a small charge based on the number of Poo balls you wish to make.

For those of you who like to plan ahead, our first program in the fall is scheduled for September 21, 2013 and is presently planned to be a "Build Your Own Turntable" program. We will be confirming the details over the summer, so keep your eye on the **Tree Line** for further information. For now, "That's All, Folks".

Best Regards,

*Keith Wingfield*

## The Difference Between Yamadori and Pot-Grown: Part III

What is a yamadori bonsai? What is a pot-grown bonsai? Here are a few simple definitions:

- **Yamadori:** Bonsai made from an older collected tree
- **Pot-Grown:** Grown as a bonsai its whole life

A yamadori was crafted over a very long time by the elements, by its location in nature. These birth marks are what make them so extraordinarily special when we make bonsai from them. A pot-grown tree, on the other hand, has been crafted by hand from its beginning. Old pot grown trees tend to have clear evidence of styling choices that date way back to its beginnings as a young plant, partly obscured by time in a pot.

Why are these distinctions important? Other than being able to tell one from the other, why should we care? It is just a labeling system. Nothing more.

Or *is* there something more?

If you take a minute, you may notice that these two types of bonsai actually feel different. Or rather, you feel different standing in front of them.

On the one hand, a gnarled pine that was harvested from a mountain far away. On the next bench, a stately maple created by an air layer many years ago. What does the pine make you feel? How about the maple?

A collected pine might make us feel tranquil or stimulated, and the maple majestic or whimsical—but those are specific to the style. Specific to the individual tree. What about how they were made? For that is more important than we tend to recognize.

If you're quiet and take a minute to wonder, you might notice a similar thread of feeling when you stand in front of all your yamadoris, and a different thread of feeling when you stand in front of all your pot-grown trees. I think it's this:

- That bonsai made from a yamadori connects us to the wild
- And a pot-grown bonsai connects us to another person

And it's curious, is it not, that each is still the medium of a tree, but one speaks with the voice of nature, and the other the voice of community. Both beautiful. Both necessary.

Crataegus

## Hearts and Sparks

Those of you who have recently joined BSOP and have attended our general meetings may have wondered what on earth is going on...In the front of the room, the guest speaker is providing great information, and those seated in the center of the room are being quietly attentive. But what is that restless perpetual motion at the periphery of the room? Why are there people migrating along the margins and in the rear, coalescing into fluid little groups with whispered conversations going from ear to ear? If you are new to BSOP you may wonder—is there a problem? Are those people being rude? Are they dissatisfied?

They aren't being rude, and no, there is no problem. They are paying attention to the speaker and can be heard discussing salient points about the presentation afterward (as well as during!). It's just that this is BSOP. This is a gathering of versatile, talented, creative people who look forward to getting together. Just as growing bonsai trees is a hands-on hobby, being in BSOP is a hands-on and “hearts-on” lifestyle. The members who are familiar with each other eagerly share their ideas every time they gather, and it creates a charged atmosphere that generates sparks of creativity. A lot of the best ideas that move BSOP forward happen on the periphery of the general meeting.

The flow of suggestions, questions, concerns, and opinions (“sparks”) has created the unique opportunities that BSOP offers. In BSOP all the activities are in a constant state of development, and the ideas that cause this dynamic growth flow from the bottom up, not the top down. Our accomplishments only happen because our members contribute their skills, talents, and passions. Here are some examples:

- A few years ago some of the ladies looked at the guys with their monster bonsai trees, shook their heads, did a little research, and announced that they liked little trees: that the smaller the tree, the more difficult it was to build, style, and maintain; that there needed to be a subgroup dedicated to the study of smaller bonsai. This was the genesis of Oregon Shohin Kai, a group that has become an excellent opportunity for new members to receive top-quality instruction in a hands-on, small-group environment. Discussion sparked opportunities for new members.



- I was part of the library “sparks”. When I joined BSOP, there was a table full of library materials free to check out, and a librarian (Barbara) who answered my questions and an invited me to join Shohin Kai. There I met Jan and got more help and another invitation. Soon, I was helping at the library table and learning how to write articles for the newsletter. Then I had an opinion—how could I remember where I found information in a magazine when there was no structure to the storage system? My frustration was expressed, discussion sparked ideas, and soon Barbara had designed a crating system for the magazines that works beautifully, and I had made the periodical index so we could find information. This created the opportunity to make good use of the library, as members continue to do, especially since Chas contributed his talents as webmaster and put the index online. Jan contributed her computer skills, and now we have an electronic checkout system and a growing database. Opinions + Concerns + Discussion = Opportunities that grow exponentially.
- There is a member named Randy whose passion for collecting wild trees has raised the level of quality of BSOP trees. His friendships with bonsai professionals like Ryan Neil and Walter Pall have brought them to our area, producing frequent opportunities for great instruction for BSOP members. Passion + Communication = Opportunities for all.
- The newsletter Backyard interviews started because a new member approached me in the back of the room during one meeting and said there were too many people in the club and it was hard for new people to know who to go to with questions. Need + Discussion = Opportunity. See what can happen when new members speak up?
- A member named Scott combines his skills as a graphic designer with his passion for display to create our annual shows, which have a big impact on the Portland community and draw many new members to BSOP. Every year he gathers a group of volunteers to help assemble the show, teaching them as they work. Passion + Communication + Teamwork = Opportunities for all.
- A member named Lee who loves to wire and teach has a passion for mentoring newcomers. How many times have I seen (and experienced) him spontaneously reaching out to teach a newbie who spoke up and asked for help! Passion + Action = Multiple Opportunities.
- New sparks are currently forming---such as a group interested in Chinese penjing and the growing number of members passionate about suiseki. BSOP continues to transform itself.

This list of examples could go on all day....THE POINT IS:  
 BSOP GROWS FROM THE ROOTS UP, AND IT NEVER STOPS GROWING, SO.....DON'T JUST SIT IN THE CHAIR IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM.  
 SPEAK UP, ASK QUESTIONS, SHARE YOUR SKILLS AND PASSIONS,  
 ACCEPT WITH AN OPEN HEART THE INVITATIONS YOU WILL RECEIVE,  
 AND REJOICE IN THE MANY FRIENDSHIPS YOU WILL BUILD.

***VOLUNTEER!***

BSOP will only become static if the newcomers fail to add their sparks to the creative maelstrom going on in the room. You don't have to know much about bonsai—after all, they let me be Secretary when I couldn't even pronounce the word “bonsai” correctly, much less grow or style a tree properly. What fun that has been! By the way, the library needs some volunteers on a regular basis, as does the search committee....hint, hint.

***Karen VunKannon***

## Pacific Northwest Bonsai Convention 2013

We have the convention information up on our website here [www.inlandbonsai.com](http://www.inlandbonsai.com) , and we have set it up so that people can register on line, so no need to print and mail registration forms. There is still a version of the registration form that can be printed and mailed for those who prefer to do that.

As you know we have an exciting lineup of guest artists, including Robert Steven, Ryan Neil, Michael Hagedorn and David DeGroot.

Our workshops feature excellent material, and a couple of them are already filled after the early registrations at last fall's convention. People who want to take a workshop should register soon while space is still available.

Also this year we are planning a world class exhibit, and as an incentive for registrants to submit their best trees to the exhibit we are offering cash awards in various categories. The awards so far include:

### **First Runner Up:**

300 from Inland Empire Bonsai Society  
Gift Certificate from Telperion Farms

### **Second Runner Up:**

\$200 from Inland Empire Bonsai Society  
Gift Certificate from Telperion Farms

### **Wee Tree Farm Best Deciduous Tree in Show Award:**

\$200 from Wee Tree Farms

### **Telperion Farms Best Pine in Show Award:**

\$200 from Telperion Farms

### **Other Awards:**

Sculpture from Legendary Art

More awards are being added, so check the website for updates.

***Roger Snipes***, Convention Chair

## Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection

### **HIDDEN GEMS — Bonsai from the Vojtilla Collection**

Dennis Vojtilla has been growing bonsai for more than 35 years. Inspired by the great hardwood forests and parks of western Pennsylvania, he favors broadleaf trees with wide, twiggy crowns, particularly those that flower and fruit. His latest endeavor is creating high-quality pinot noir bonsai from vines in his vineyard.

### **HIDDEN GEMS — Bonsai from the Laws Collection**

Doctor Robert Laws is a retired dentist whose professional focus on detail and perfection has transferred with wonderful results to his large collection of beautiful bonsai. His 30 years of experience benefit his trees and the bonsai community at large, where he is very active.

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Yangzhou penjing

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### Tools

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-and-

Hard to find items such as camellia oil, HB 101

Ask about bonsai society member discounts.

To contact us, please call or email  
Chris & Lisa Kirk • (503) 859-3697 • tfarms@wvi.com



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!

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