



the **TREE LINE**

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

November 2012

Upcoming Events

November 13 6:30-8:30 **Penjing Discussion Group** Mt. Tabor Middle School, Room 213, 5899 SE 58th Ave. Portland

November 17 **Mentorship Meeting**
St. Philip Neri 2408 SE 16th Ave

November 27 7-9pm **BSOP Meeting**
St. Philip Neri 2408 SE 16th Ave
Includes **Special Auction** of bonsai items from different sources. Page 7

December 1 10-2pm **OSK Elite Care Center**, 12353 SW Grant Ave, Tigard

Dec. 8 6-9pm **BSOP Holiday Party**
St. Philip Neri 2408 SE 16th Ave

April 18-20 **2013 Intl Bonsai Convention**
Yangzhou, China

Giving Thanks

November is the month of Thanksgiving, so I thought I'd share the 'thank you note' Dan Robinson sent me following his program last month:

Hi Gregg,

Just a note to thank you for the invitation to Portland Bonsai. We enjoyed sharing our "vision" of bonsai to the members, and it was fun being with so many old friends.

You have a rare group in your club. So many sweet people in one room is an amazing experience. My wife commented about that, and enjoyed meeting everyone. She expressed how much fun your club is, and made us want to be closer somehow.

We hope you enjoyed the demonstration, and that the new owners of trees and books are happy with their step into the "wild" world of bonsai.

Come up and join us on a weekend sometime; we gather around and play with bonsai with assorted friends. It is a chance to work on some advanced bonsai trees, and get your hands dirty.

Best to you and your wonderful club that made us feel so welcome.

Dan and Diane

A big thanks also to Lyle Feilmeier for doing a terrific job with the live video, what a difference that makes for everyone to see the action! Thanks to Lee Cheatle for lending us his turntable. And to all who turned out for the program, as Dianne Robinson mentioned "how much fun your club is". We should all give ourselves a pat on the back for keeping bonsai interest a passion in Portland.

Our program for November features Walter Pall joining us all the way from Munich, Germany. Walter makes a trip to the U.S. at least once a year and we are lucky to have him in for a program. The topic of the program will be one of Walter's infamous 'tree discussions' and I am asking each and everyone of you that would like to bring a tree in for possible selection in his discussion to do so. Walter will select from all the trees brought in a handful or so to talk about for the evening. It will be interesting to see which trees he selects to talk about. Walter is one of the jurors chosen for the Artisans Cup of Portland next fall, so if you plan to put a tree in that show, November's program is a good test of how your tree might stand up to one of the jurors for that show. It will be a great learning opportunity for all and I highly recommend you don't miss it. I plan to be arriving at the church around 5:30 to set up and it would be good to get your tree there by 6:30 at the latest so Walter can view all we are offering.

But that's not all...the following day, November 28th, Walter will be conducting a 'bring your own tree' workshop at the St. Paul room at the same church our meeting is held. It will be from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. the cost is \$90 for the full day; \$60 for a half day and \$20 to be a silent observer. Walter has requested you choose silent observer if you don't have any wiring skills. Randy Knight will be on hand to assist Walter and will be bringing a dozen or so of his most excellent collected trees. These will be available for those that don't have a tree to work on and will be available for purchase. Randy will also have wire available for those that would like to try their hand at a tree and maybe weren't planning to do so. Contact Randy at: 503 396-6323 to sign up for the workshop or if you have any questions. The St. Paul room is located across from Carvlin Hall where we meet. Sign up soon to guarantee your place as there is a limit of 12 for this workshop!

Wishing you all a Happy Thanksgiving and looking forward to seeing you on the 27th

Greg

In Our Own Backyard...

Dave and Donna Burnett of Daybreak Gardens

While a minority of BSOP members live in Washington state, some of them seem to have ten green thumbs, especially Dave and Donna Burnett of Battle Ground, WA. In the time that I have known them, I have come to hold a deep respect for their patient nurturing of native species in the Pacific Northwest. The Burnetts used to live in Portland, where their love of plants inspired the neighbors to label their yard "Burnett Park." When they relocated to Washington in 1976 to start a nursery business, much of Burnett Park came along in the VW bus, even some large, interesting rocks. Their preparations demonstrated their willingness to research: they learned all the soil types throughout their ten acres so they could accommodate the plants' needs. Daybreak Gardens is now dotted with trees, greenhouses, shade houses, flowers, and garden beds. The Burnetts were founding members of the Specialty Nursery Association of Clark County, initiated the annual spring plant sale at Clark County Fairgrounds, and appeared many times on the speakers' list.

At first, a major part of their business was field growing of large native species for sale as landscape trees. They remember digging a large order of trees for Forest Farm through an inch of ice one December! They had nourished the development of fine roots in those trees by periodic root-pruning in the field, resulting in 100% survival for the customer. Dave and Donna did

not know at the time that root-pruning was an important bonsai technique. Donna's background in art and biology led her to experiment with artistic pruning of trees, another foreshadowing of a future in bonsai. In the mid 1980s, they added decorative container growing with specialty pruning to the business. At a bonsai show in 1989, Marge Kokko introduced the Burnetts to BSOP. As new members, they found Alan Taft's pre-meeting training sessions in fundamental bonsai techniques very instructive. They continued to learn, and gradually, their business evolved into the development of pre-bonsai trees. As Donna says, it was all a natural progression.

The Burnetts are devoted to research and experimentation, including organic gardening techniques and the development of soils and fertilizers. They even grew 'red wiggler' worms commercially and later used the castings to nourish trees. Dave and Donna have trees in the nursery over thirty years old that they have grown from seedlings and cuttings.



Subalpine Fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*) grown since 1983 in a sand bed, ready to be collected



Shore Pine (*P. contorta* var. *contorta*) from a 1980 seedling, with heavily corked trunk

They possess an encyclopedic knowledge of species and cultivars. During a stroll among the many plants in their nursery, the Burnetts' discussion of growing techniques, their attention to the specific needs of each species, and their ready recollection of the history of individual specimens will astonish the visitor.

Dave's background in electrical engineering seems to have predisposed him to be interested in the science of cultivating trees, right down to the chemical level. He has a fascination with pines, and credits Gary Wood with recently shedding new light on their botanical subtleties, knowledge which he is already applying in the nursery. Donna finds special pleasure in working with azaleas and vine maples and preparing trees for class examples. Whenever practical, both of them enjoy nursing damaged or struggling trees back to health. Where life remains there still may be a very fine bonsai lurking in the shadows. The end result of the recovery process often turns the original problem into a feature that enhances the quality of the tree as a bonsai.

What are their views on the art of bonsai? They both like natural-styled trees that are dignified while being a bit unconventional.



Recovering Irish Yew (*Taxus baccata* 'Fastigiata') with natural shari, ready for the next stage of development



Natural-styled Sitka Spruce cultivar (*Picea sitchensis* 'Papoose')

Donna likes a free-flowing look, and dislikes trees that are so rigid they seem fake.

Both Burnetts believe the tree should be allowed the freedom to help choose its own shape, and they feel most sympathetic toward the Chinese penjing approach. Dave loves literati, clump, multiple trunk, and raft styles. When a clump or grove is viewed from the proper height, he feels he has stepped into the middle of a forest.



Free-flowing style
(Azalea 'Purple Splendor')



Clump style (Azalea 'Purple Splendor')
viewed at the proper height

How about bonsai in the US? They are enthusiastic about our very qualified BSOP members and the professionally-trained teachers in our area. The current openness to native species and truly American styles pleases them. They express concern about the social trend toward passive consumerism, especially in the younger generation. Acquiring skills and using them is what's really fulfilling; it isn't just about ownership. Training in creative arts is important for children, and children are welcome in the Burnetts' classes. Dave and Donna want a long-term relationship with customers who are seeking knowledge of how to develop their trees, not just making a purchase. Although business is more challenging in the current economy and with the competition of the Internet, the Burnetts feel strongly that dedicated bonsai enthusiasts want direct contact with bonsai professionals to fill their needs. At Daybreak Gardens, the goal is to form lifelong partnerships with both trees and people.

Karen, Dave, and Donna

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 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!

Library Highlights

What good are all those magazines in the library? Let's take a look at International Bonsai. There are two aspects of this journal that are especially appealing. One is the fact that each issue focuses on one species or category of bonsai and announces that fact right on the cover. This means there will be several feature articles on various aspects of that topic. No need to haul home crates of magazines to search for tidbits of information scattered through them. You know at a glance which issue to pick up and what you'll be getting inside.

The regularly recurring articles are the second appealing aspect. John Wiessinger talks about a pest or disease every month in "Right Before Your Eyes". The Gallery features terrific photos. There is always an article about a current exhibition or convention, and the report includes beautiful photos and a summary of valuable tips from the guest artists. The "how-to" articles showing multi-year progressions are always on colored pages so you can turn right to them. Every issue has a kei do tokonoma display. There is always an article about a contemporary masterpiece tree. There is a series on shohin bonsai. When feature articles require diagrams, this magazine spares gives them lavishly and in color. There is usually a book review in each issue.

The diversity and depth of the articles coupled with the abundant photography and illustrations make International Bonsai an invaluable resource for the serious bonsai student. While other periodicals emphasize individual artists, International Bonsai offers practical information about all aspects of cultivation, styling, and display.

Karen VunKannon

BSOP Election

The nomination committee is delighted to recommend the following BSOP members for the 2012-2014 BSOP board. Voting will take place at the November 2012 BSOP meeting on Tuesday, November 27th from 7:00 to 9:00.

President	Chas Martin
V.P of Programs	Al Polito
V.P. of Membership	Margie Kinoshita
Secretary	Karen VunKannon
Treasurer	Robert Wofford
Past President	Eileen Knox



MENTORSHIP NEWS -- NOVEMBER 2012

Hey, where did all the dry weather go? October has become one of the wettest months ever leading into the fall. First we were still watering almost every day and now we are putting wedges under the ends of the pots to help promote drainage and trying to keep the leaves on our deciduous trees dry enough for the full colors to develop. Mother Nature can throw you a curve.

Our October program by Rocky Lawton on his process for making your own pots and trays was excellent. Rocky had prepared demonstration materials in advance for each of the stages for making his pots and trays. Using these materials, he was able to demonstrate his process from beginning to end and had some very interesting completed pots and trays to show as well. He will be continuing his efforts over the winter and testing the weather hardiness of his pots. He will have more to report in the Spring.

Our November Mentorship Class will be held at St. Phillip Neri Church on Saturday, November 17, 2012 from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. . Our topic this month will be on Winterization and Protection of our trees during what promises to be a very wet late fall and a colder winter than the last few have been. As always, the Mentorship class is open to everyone, whether you are an old hand , brand new to Bonsai or just thinking about maybe getting started.

I hope everyone is on schedule with their fall feeding program with the 0 - 10 -10 feeding regimen. This will do wonders for your trees next spring. Just think of all the lovely wool gathering you can do over the winter contemplating how robust and lush your trees are going to be next spring because of your efforts now.

Caution: I was really being serious earlier when I spoke of putting wedges under one end of the pots to promote drainage. Even with the soil mix that most of us are using, because the rain drops do not fall directly and steadily on to the soil itself, but rather in drips and splashes, the percolation rate is much slower through the soil. The impact of the surface tension of the water increases in this environment and can result in higher water volume being retained in the pot and soil. This can result in standing water in the bottom of the pot. Placing a wedge of some sort (a piece of wood, clay pot feet, a flat stone, foam block, rubber door stop wedge, plastic painters pyramids, piece of broken pot) under one end of the pot to raise it a half inch to and inch will substantially improve the overall drainage in the pot during this very wet period.

Best Regards,

Keith Wingfield

Special Auction

There will be a special auction of magazines, books, lime sulphur, daconil, small pots, display stands and a lot of other items . The club will benefit from these sales.

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.

BSOP MENTORSHIP CLASS SCHEDULE

NOVEMBER 2012 -- OCTOBER 2013

November 17, 2012	Tree Preparation for Winter Storage Keith Wingfield
December 2012	<u>NO MEETING</u>
January 19, 2013	Boon Mix Soil/Porosity & Permeability - Keith Wingfield / Steve Wilcox
February 16, 2013	Repotting/Trimming/Wiring - Keith Wingfield/Lee Cheatle/Steve Wilcox
March 16, 2013	Bugs/Pests/Diseases - Keith Wingfield/ Lyle Feilmeier
April 20, 2013	POO Balls/Annual Fertilization Program - Keith Wingfield/ Scott Tice
May 18, 2013	Tree Development/Thinning & Pruning - Keith Wingfield/Lee Cheatle/ Bob Laws

OR

	Making Your Own Turn Table - Keith Wingfield/Scott Tice & others
June 15, 2013	Alternate from Month of May Choice
July 2013	<u>NO MEETING</u>
August 2013	<u>NO MEETING</u>
September 21, 2013	Fall Fertilization - Keith Wingfield
October 2013	Pot Selection/Planning Tree Development - Keith Wingfield

ALL CLASSES ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC EXCEPT FOR THE SOIL, POO BALLS AND TURN TABLE CLASSES FOR WHICH THERE IS A MOD-EST FEE. SOME CLASSES WILL REQUIRE AN RSVP FOR MATERIAL PLANNING PURPOSES. UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTIFIED, ALL CLASSES ARE HELD AT ST. PHILLIP NERI CHURCH, PAULEY CENTER AND ARE CONDUCTED FROM 2:00 P.M. UNTIL 5:00 P.M. ON THE SCHEDULED SATURDAY.

Keith Wingfield

November Oregon Shohin Kai

I can't don't think I've ever attended a meeting with as many smiles as I saw at the November 3rd meeting of Oregon Shohin Kai. Our guest artist, Lee Cheatle, came to teach wiring, and we all had a wonderful time. The feedback from the new members who attended was very positive. To begin, Lee did a demonstration for our members who had not yet wired a tree. His explanations were clear and concise, and he gave a reason for each tip or technique he explained. This was really helpful for the less-experienced attendees. After the demo, Lee went around and worked with individuals in turn. He gave so much good advice on trees that a small crowd followed him around the room as he worked. Lee has a great deal of knowledge to share, coupled with a generosity of spirit and the good humor that keeps people coming back for more.

Karen VunKannon

Shifting Trend Creates Opportunity for BSOP

My career in marketing has taught me that trends do not change easily or often. When a trend shift begins, it creates tremendous opportunities. That window of opportunity opens only briefly until a new trend is established.

An important trend shift for bonsai in America is already in progress. Bonsai artists from across the U.S., Europe and Asia are recognizing the improved quality of bonsai produced in the Pacific Northwest and they are recognizing the excellence of the regional artists who are producing it.

At the recent PNBCA Convention I spoke with featured artist, Ted Matson. Ted is also a former President of the Golden State Bonsai Federation. He is well traveled, well connected and well informed. He observed that the epicenter of bonsai outside of Japan is shifting to the Pacific Northwest. He articulated his point in detail via email which is reproduced in its entirety below.

I am not the first to see this trend, but I'm experienced enough to understand what an incredible opportunity this is to take our educational mission to a higher level.

Trend factors in the near future include The Artisans Cup, a national bonsai show hosted by the Portland Art Museum, the emergence of the Bonsai Village and the high profile expansion of facilities at the Japanese Garden. These are in addition to our increasing requests for demonstrations and our ongoing shows at the Japanese Garden.

Our active support of these activities will make BSOP the essential educational resource for a growing bonsai community. Our participation will result in many new members. At the same time, we have an opportunity to enhance our Mentorship, Shohin Kai and our monthly presentations to deliver richer educational services.

From: Ted Matson

Sent: Monday, October 29, 2012 5:10 PM

To: Chas Martin

Subject: Re: Portland Bonsai Scene

Chas,

Yes, I did put forth the idea that the epicenter of American bonsai is moving to the Northwest. I really have based my opinion on a few things.

Oregon is the nursery capital of the country. There's not much that can't be grown there so the source of bonsai material is extensive. I know bonsai artists from both around the US and from Europe who travel up there seeking fine specimens to both work on and sell.

Especially with Ryan Neal and Mike Hagedorn the Portland area has two of the best emerging American bonsai talents, both with top Japanese credentials. I think it was Matt Reel from Portland who has been studying over there since he graduated from high school and most likely will be returning someday. With the combined talents, skills and knowledge, and with access to exquisite material (thanks to Randy Knight, another internationally-known talent with a special niche in the bonsai world as a collector), Ryan and Mike have already pushed the level of artistry to new heights. There are exciting times ahead in bonsai because of this combination of talent and material.

Both Ryan and Mike have established bonsai schools and are trying to build them in the Japanese tradition, where students from anywhere and everywhere come to them. That's already happening and I believe Ryan even has some European students that come to study from time to time. With their travels, I'm sure they'll continue to promote their nurseries and I can see the day when they will not travel much, but a steady stream of bonsai students and apprentices will seek them out.

Their joint creation of The Artisan's Cup competition at the Portland Museum of Art, although a year away, has already, I believe, captured as much attention as the U.S. National Bonsai Exhibition. For the bonsai community, we strive to have bonsai recognized as an art, and not just as a hobby. This exhibition will do much to promote the idea, and that truly raises the bar for bonsai in this country. This is where bonsai in America is being redefined. And, if this develops into an annual or biannual event, which I believe is the intent, it should have sustaining power.

To both help and benefit from this, there is a tradition and strong bonsai community in the Northwest, notably the PNBCA and the success of it's conventions that can only help clubs throughout the region grow. Especially for events, you need a strong local bonsai group, and Portland certainly seems to have that.

Looking further north, the Weyerhaeuser Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection is one of the finest public bonsai gardens in the country, and there aren't many in the bonsai community who don't know about it. In addition, Dave DeGroot is well known for both his artistry and extensive knowledge of bonsai culture, and is a popular feature artist/teacher at conventions and conferences in his own right.

We also can't forget Dan Robinson in Bremerton. He's one of the legends in bonsai, and continues to be a viable force throughout the bonsai world. Even this weekend, at our GSBF convention, Kevin Willson from England, known for his carving skills, gave much credit to Dan as an inspiration in his bonsai career. Finally, Dan's Elandan Gardens is renowned throughout the bonsai world (I still haven't managed to see it in person!!!), and, along with the Pacific Rim Collection, is a must-see for bonsai people who visit on vacation, family trips and other non-bonsai driven travels.

That's pretty much it I think.

TM

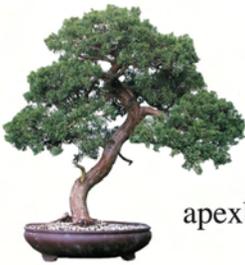


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Manuel Gonzales, Yew (*Taxus baccata*) FOBBS Certificate of Merit



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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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