



the **TREE LINE**

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

March 2012

March 17 - 2 to 5pm **Mentorship Meeting**
St. Philip Neri, 2408 SE 16th Ave. Portland

March 27 - 7 to 9pm **BSOP Monthly Meeting**
St. Philip Neri, 2408 SE 16th Ave. Portland

April 7 - 10am to 2pm **OSK Meeting**
Elite Care Center, 53 SW Grant Ave, Tigard

April 14, 2012, Saturday **Pacific Rim Work Party** Call Jan for info (503) 504-7760

April 21 - 2 to 5pm **Mentorship Meeting**
St. Philip Neri, 2408 SE 16th Ave. Portland

April 24 - 7 to 9pm **BSOP Monthly Meeting**
St. Philip Neri, 2408 SE 16th Ave. Portland

September 14-16, 2012 - **PNBCA Convention**
Hosted by **BSOP**, Hilton Hotel, Vancouver, WA

Before I Forget

We had a special guest in attendance for the January meeting--Jack Wilson. He made a point of telling me what a great club we have here. I tend to take it for granted sometimes, being so close to the 'frontline' of the action. There's a lot going on bonsai-wise at any given time and I couldn't think of a better place to be if you're just starting out--don't be afraid to tap some of the resources available to you the club offers. The ever-growing library, Mentorship, Oregon Shohin Kai, individual study groups and nurseries.

The climate here doesn't hurt either. I woke up to a skiff of snow on my deck this morning and it looks as if that may be winter's last hurrah. Time to get into re-potting full swing, starting with my deciduous trees that are starting to break bud. I tend to save my pines for April and my junipers for May or later. I always watch the buds for the tree to tell me what to do.

Scott Elser is presenting the March program; **Cambium Magic** - using grafting and air layering to create and improve your bonsai. Scott also found a perfect tree to air layer. It's in the ground, but that should not matter too much.

Mark your calendars for April and Michael Hagedorn. He's got a program about bonsai display for us. One of his duties during his apprenticeship at Shinji Suzuki's bonsai museum was to create a display to greet visiting clients and guests to the museum. I'm sure this will be of special interest to those of you wondering what to do with your bonsai when it's ready to show.

And further out in May we have Sean Smith for our program about suiseki--Japanese for 'water stone'. He will talk about stones and the special little stands carved out of wood called 'daiza'. The meeting will be on a different night from the usual fourth Tuesday; it is scheduled for Thursday, May tenth. We will gather at the same place, St. Philip Neri Church, same hall, Carvlin Hall and the same time, seven p.m. David De Groot from the Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection spear headed Shawn's visit, so you don't want to miss this. To add to the excitement, there will be a workshop the following day, May eleventh on carving your own daiza and there will be a range of prices available to fit every budget.

More about this from Jan Hettick: Sean will lead a daiza making workshop on Friday, May 11th. The workshop will be held at the Fanno Creek Elite Care facility, 12353 SW Grant Avenue, Tigard, starting at 10:00 AM and running about 3 1/2 to 4 hours. Participation in the workshop will be limited to 12 persons. Cost will be between about \$38 and \$46 per person (depending on how many sign up). Silent observers are welcome, but are asked to contribute \$5 to \$10 toward costs. You may bring your own stone and wood, or can purchase a stone and wood from Sean for \$80 (value of the stone with finished daiza is around \$250.) Those who purchase Sean's stones can expect to have a daiza that is nearly ready for finishing at the end of the workshop. *Continued next page.*

Library Highlights

Sometimes it seems as if the gods of bonsai take aim at one particular tree...

There once was an ambitious Rocky Mountain juniper with designs on the world stage. Of course, the road to fame can be a difficult one. At its debut, a styling demonstration at the BCI 1999 convention, the juniper was rejected by Masahiko Kimura; but it was lucky enough to be purchased by Doug Hawley, who was proud to own it. This juniper was healthy, had wonderful areas of undeveloped deadwood, and was more than 400 years old.

A couple of years later, it seemed the tree's time for fame had finally arrived: Ernie Kuo saw it in Doug's garden and raved over it. As a result, Doug decided to re-pot the tree and change the trunk. In the midst of this process, Doug left the tree on the potting bench to go get some more soil, and when he took his eyes off of the tree, he heard a terrible noise—the potting bench had collapsed under the weight of the tree! Doug's next view of the tree was the sight of it cartwheeling down the 60-foot slope behind his house, accompanied by the old pot and the new pot, which were rolling off in different directions. The juniper then crashed into an innocent “bystanding” elm tree. The branches survived the fall, due to the very hard wood of this species, but the lowest and most important branch lost all of its roots. Like any intrepid bonsai artist (optimistic past the point of reason), Doug decided the tree would be improved without the now unsupported main branch; and then of course, he did not stop there, but restyled the whole tree.

The next few years saw endless struggles with pests and continual restyling, until finally the tree was down to one branch. Somehow, the juniper survived. Then Ryan Neil came along, and became so enthusiastic about the tree that he restyled it, too. Now you'd think the tree would get a Purple Heart or something, or at least be exhibited, but no....the bonsai gods were not yet satisfied.

You can read about the many trials and tribulations of this juniper in Doug Hawley's article, “Regional Bonsai Care: Rocky Mountain Juniper,” in the *Journal of the American Bonsai Society*, 2011 (Vol. 45, No. 4). The tale of Doug's struggle with this tree will give hope to even the most inept student of bonsai.

Karen VanKannon

Those who bring their own stones can expect an evaluation of the stone and a start on the daiza making process. Your progress by the end of the workshop will depend on the stone, the wood, and the artist. If you bring your own stone, it should be cut (flat bottom) and no larger than fist size. We will have a few pieces of walnut available for purchase. If you wish to participate in the Sean Smith Daiza Making Workshop, contact Jan Hettick, janhettick@comcast.net, 503-504-7760. Let me know if you want a Sean Smith stone.

Like I said, there's no shortage of bonsai-related things for us to do in Portland! See you at the meeting

Greg

Oregon Shohin Kai

OSK attendees really had a wonderful day for our Repotting day on March 3rd. The sunshine was streaming through the windows and the see-through ceiling, making for a warm and friendly workshop meeting. All of the worktables were full and busy with root pruning and replanting with new soil. Newer Bonsai growers/members were receiving assistance from experienced members and getting their hands dirty.

We would like to invite you to our next meeting on April 7th so you can experience the open and daylight venue we are having our meetings in, and give yourself one additional day for preparing your trees for the coming growing season. In April Dennis Vojtilla will show us how to make small trees from big ones, using air layering and cuttings.

Watch your email for meeting details.

Notum

Recycle Wire

Please bring your used copper wire to the monthly meetings. Roger Case will have a five gallon plastic 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 a little income for BSOP.

In Our Own Backyard...Jan Hettick

People who like to be busy often find that life brings them a wealth of opportunities to take on responsibility. Jan Hettick has certainly taken on an astonishing number of them. The list of roles she has filled within BSOP is long and impressive: Secretary, First Vice-President, Treasurer, President, Past President, one of the co-founders of Oregon Shohin Kai, designer of the membership database, author of the library inventory, designer of the auction database, organizer of the annual Pacific Rim work party, and organizer of the 2012 PNBCA convention. She enjoys being in BSOP, which she describes as a bunch of talented people having a good time. Jan says that she just likes to be busy and enjoys working with a team of people to accomplish a goal. She sees herself as a person who works best in the background. Jan also loves to travel, whether it is to conventions or to collect rocks for suiseki. She relishes the life-long friendships that have developed as a result of commitment to the long-term art of bonsai.

An Oregon native, Jan has always been a self-starter. While working in an office, she learned a lot about real estate appraising on the job and took the initiative to take courses in the subject and earn the license that led to her career. Other interests include ballet, theater, off-road driving, gardening, and bicycling. She has earned a Master Gardener certificate. Her latest hobby is woodworking, with a focus on making bonsai stands. Her only complaint about retirement is that she cannot do everything she is interested in all at the same time. She is impatient to get to all of the many activities that fascinate her.

Jan has always liked plants in pots and has tried to grow them since she was a small child. Her family, noting her persistence, gave her a class with Masa Furukawa. In that class, she met Chris Julhes, who brought her to BSOP. Anne Spencer and Scott Elser helped her learn to grow bonsai trees. What began as a hobby gradually took over her life. Tongue-in-cheek, Jan says she realized that the key to success is to have more than one tree, so you won't forget to water it! Her favorite step in the process of developing a bonsai tree is spring re-potting. She describes it as the moment when you take what you have and make it look better by setting the direction for the year. Jan seems especially fond of crab apples.



Jan describes suiseki as “even more exciting” than bonsai trees. She feels she was born with a love of rock collecting. Her voice lights up with excitement in anticipation of the upcoming visit by Sean Smith to BSOP in May because his enthusiasm is contagious, and because he presents suiseki as an art that can be shared by everyone.

When I first met Jan, I saw a self-effacing woman to whom others looked for answers. Her many talents are only slowly revealed to a new acquaintance. Once you get to know her you find several qualities in her that are important in the art of bonsai—focus, determination, discipline, organization, a passion for perfection of details and for accomplishment—in short, craftsmanship. For a long time now, her craftsmanship has been devoted to the growth of BSOP more than to the art of developing trees. She has earned a position of respect among the other generous people who volunteer a great deal of time to the Society. They express confidence that Jan will know what needs to be done, will recruit and motivate the right people to get it done, and will see it through to completion. Although she is only one of the many volunteers who have generously helped to make BSOP a successful organization, Jan Hettick's contributions have set a very high standard.

Karen VanKannon

Spring Show May 19th & 20th

Well, it's still a little frosty out in the morning, but our annual spring show is just around the corner. The show dates are May 19th and 20th, which is the weekend after Mother's Day this year. You can expect much the same in the way of format and quality of trees, the Saturday night critique, the back deck demos and the general bonsai camaraderie.

I hope that you have been prepping your trees in anticipation. Keep in mind any new pots that might be needed while you are repotting this season, or maybe the trees need a little protection from our occasional spring hail. Or maybe it's the timing of pruning to have the flowers and foliage come out just right. And then there is the moss gently covering the surface. There certainly are a lot of details to take care of to maximize the display of trees. Maybe it's even shopping for a new stand for that special tree.

If you have a tree or two that you would like to exhibit this year, please shoot me a photo and a quick note to my new email address: bonsaielser@gmail.com. I know that many of you have gems that are ready to come out into the light. We will need a good mix of conifers and deciduous, large and small and shohin, slanting, cascades, on rocks, etc...

We are expecting to raise the bar yet once again for a great show, as all of our trees continue to develop and age. We are also expecting to offer the same program as we have in the recent past. And that is where you come in. We will need many volunteers to contribute an hour or two and come and enjoy the show. We will need folks to help with our docent tours, and to give working demos on the back deck. We'll also need folks to man the show itself (tree sitters) and folks able to help set up and take down the show.

Right now we are working on lining up our talent to give the talk at our annual Saturday Night Critique. We are planning the a great evening, starting with a finger food and dessert potluck social hour at 6:30. During that time we will be voting on the best conifer, deciduous, and shohin trees in the show.

The top five trees in each category will be identified by our guest artist and then we'll do the rest with popular voting from there, with all the club members present participating. At 7:30 the critique begins in earnest, wrapping up 8:30-9.

This is one of the highlights of our bonsai year, so don't miss it. The price is the same as last year, \$10. Tickets will be on sale at the March and April meetings from Robert. Don't miss this great event.

Scott Elser

503-803-5343
bonsaielser@gmail.com

Sean Smith Daiza Making Workshop

Mark your calendar! Sean Smith, world famous bonsai and suiseki artist, is coming to the Pacific Northwest. He will be in Portland Thursday and Friday, May 10th and 11th, 2012.

Sean will lead a daiza making workshop on Friday, May 11th. The workshop will be held at the Fanno Creek Elite Care facility, 12353 SW Grant Avenue, Tigard, starting at 10:00 AM and running about 3 1/2 to 4 hours. Participation in the workshop will be limited to 12 persons.

Cost will be between about \$38 and \$46 per person (depending on how many sign up). Silent observers are welcome, but are asked to contribute \$5 to \$10 toward costs.

You may bring your own stone and wood, or can purchase a stone and wood from Sean for \$80 (value of the stone with finished daiza is around \$250.) Those who purchase Sean's stones can expect to have a daiza that is nearly ready for finishing at the end of the workshop. Those who bring their own stones can expect an evaluation of the stone and a start on the daiza making process. Your progress by the end of the workshop will depend on the stone, the wood, and the artist. If you bring your own stone, it should be cut (flat bottom) and no larger than fist size. We will have a few pieces of walnut available for purchase.

If you wish to participate in the Sean Smith Daiza Making Workshop, contact Jan Hettick, janhettick@comcast.net, 503-504-7760. Let me know if you want a Sean Smith stone.

On the next page see a representative photograph of workshop stones. Some stones will have only 2 peaks, but are reportedly very good quality 5-6 inch, blue-black stones of Pennsylvania limestone.

Sean Smith Biography

Mr. Sean Smith lives in the United States in Marysville Pennsylvania, where he owns and operates Custom Oriental Wood-craft. Sean took his 20 year passion for Bonsai and Suiseki along with his extensive background in carpentry and put all them together to start his own business in 1994. He currently creates Bonsai display tables, and carves Daiza for renowned Bonsai and Suiseki enthusiasts all over the world. As a result of this work several awards have been bestowed upon him for his craftsmanship as well as his strict adherence to these ancient Japanese art forms.

□ In 2001, Mr. Arishige Matsuura, President of the Japanese Suiseki Association, proclaimed Sean the number one Daiza carver outside of Japan.

□ In 2003, Sean was the first American to exhibit an American Suiseki in the Japanese National Suiseki Show at the Meiji Shrine in Tokyo, Japan.

□ In 2008 Sean was recognized by the World Bonsai Friendship Federation for promoting and expanding the Japanese art of suiseki

In 2004, Sean was asked by Senji Morimae to come to Japan to study Bonsai and Suiseki at his nursery outside of Tokyo. With a passion for constantly learning, Sean accepted the invitation. As a result he was able to hone his skills as well as broaden his knowledge of Japanese related antiques. Sean continues to make this trip every year and has been fortunate to have studied the following art forms.

□ In 2005, he was invited to study Zen in Daitokuji-in, at the sub temple of Hoshyu-in in Kyoto, Japan. Sean also studied daiza carving in Hamamatsu Japan, with Japan's leading daiza carver, Mr. Koji Suzuki. Sean was his 1st and only student.

□ In 2007, Sean studied Kiri Bako making with Japan's top box maker, Mr. Akira Shiraishi in Tokyo.

□ In 2009, Sean got the opportunity to study scroll making with Mr. Seizi Maruoka, one of Japan's leading scroll makers.

□ In 2010, he studied the art of pot repair with Mr. Nakada Tomohide, in Tokyo.

□ In 2011, Sean studied the art of Display with Mr. Negishi in Hanyu City, Japan.



Currently, Sean lectures all over the United and Europe on Bonsai, Suiseki and Daiza carving. He is also a contributing editor of many international Bonsai and Suiseki magazines as well as the North American Viewing Stone Society, and the International Stone Appreciation Society. He is also a director of the National Bonsai Federation in Washington DC., as well as a member of the Nippon Suiseki Association, European Suiseki, and past president of the Susquehanna Bonsai Club, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. In addition, he is the head organizer for the International Stone Appreciation Symposium held every 2 years since 2002, in Harrisburg, PA.



Workshop Stone



National Suiseki Collection, and is now part of the Permanent National Collection. At the 2010 Golden State Bonsai Federation convention Bob was a tanseki (river collecting) leader and moderator of the Suiseki panel discussion, and presented informative talk on Suiseki aesthetics for those who participated in the collecting trip using stones they had gathered that day.

For the PNBBCA 2012 convention, Bob will demonstrate the art of setting up a stone exhibit, present a lecture on Suiseki "From Riverbank to Display", provide a demonstration on making wooden daiza, and present two short informal talks on the art of viewing stones and stone evaluation. Please check the convention website for detailed descriptions and registration prices for these events.

We are pleased to announce an addition to **"Imagine & Create"**, PNBBCA 2012 Bonsai Convention hosted by the Bonsai Society of Portland. We have added a number of events featuring the art of Suiseki and viewing stones which will be lead by Bob Carlson of San Francisco, California.

Currently president of the California Suiseki Society, Bob has been avidly hunting and displaying stones in the Japanese aesthetic for 15 years, having been introduced to the art by Sensei Felix Rivera at a demonstration at the Bonsai Society of San Francisco. Bob collects stones in the breathtaking coastal rivers of Northern California, often visiting the Eel River, word famous for serpentine, jade and jaspers worn by the action of water into sinuous, evocative forms.

Bob has exhibited stones for the California Suiseki Society, the Bonsai Society of San Francisco, and the Golden State Bonsai Federation. His museum exhibitions include the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco and the National Bonsai Collection in Washington DC. In 2009 one of Bob's stones was selected for display in the tokanoma of the



Matt Reel working on an Ezo spruce in the new studio
From Crataegus.com

Pacific Rim Collection Work Party

The Spring 2012 **Pacific Rim Work Party** is scheduled for **Saturday, April 14th**. This is the annual event where we travel to Federal Way to help the Bonsai Exhibit clean up their grounds and get ready for the summer's visitors.

We do things like pull weeds, trim landscape plants, cut back ivy, etc. Occasionally some will help a bit with the exhibit trees, but mostly we work on the grounds. We'll work for 3 or 4 hours, then gather for a critique by Dave DeGroot. Each person can bring one tree for Dave's review, instructions and styling tips. (It is rumored that people who volunteer will also be invited to a Sean Smith lecture on May 12th, although that is yet to be confirmed.)

Be sure to bring your own favorite gardening tools – loppers, pruning shears, buckets, gloves, knee pads, rain gear, sun screen (ever the optimist), and LUNCH.

This is a great opportunity to see the Collection trees while we help with preparation for their Buds & Blooms event over Mother's Day Weekend. The sign-up sheet is full, but if you want to come, I can sign you up as a substitute. Call Jan Hettick, 503-504-7760 or email janhettick@comcast.net.

If you're driving direct, try to arrive at the Collection by 10:00. Expect a drive of about 2 ½ hours, slightly more if you drive the speed limit. If you want to car pool, we'll meet at 7:15AM in the north parking lot of Elmer's Restaurant by Delta Park, Exit 306b from Portland.

Jan

In Memoriam

Ralph Stryker died a few days ago at the age of 96. Even though he was a forester all his working days, he never raised bonsai. He did support his wife Edris' bonsai endeavors though. Always friendly and helpful whenever you saw him, Ralph was good company. He and Edris just moved into Vancouver from Longview to be closer to their son and his family.

Edris is having problems with her memory so if you wish to send a card to her send it via Dr. Larry Stryker, 7508 N.E. Vancouver Mall Drive, Vancouver Wa. 98662



This Japanese Boxwood (*Buxus microphylla japonica*) (12 inches/ 30 cm tall) *From Bonsai Mirai*

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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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