



# the TREE LINE

the official monthly publication of the BONSAI SOCIETY of PORTLAND

January 2012

January 24 - 7 to 9pm **BSOP Monthly Meeting**

St. Philip Neri, 2408 SE 16th Ave. Portland

**Note - Not the last Tuesday**

February 11 - 10am to 2pm **OSK Meeting**

Elite Care Center, 53 SW Grant Ave, Tigard

February 18 - 2 to 5pm **Mentorship Meeting**

RSVP, materials charge

February 28 - 7 to 9pm **BSOP Monthly Meeting**

St. Philip Neri, 2408 SE 16th Ave. Portland

September 14-16, 2012 - **PNBCA Convention**

Hilton Hotel, Vancouver, WA

## Barerooting...

Now that's a dirty word! We are coming up on one of the most important seasonal tasks in bonsai-potting and re-potting. When we move a tree from its training container to a bonsai pot for the first time, that's potting. If the tree is already established in a bonsai pot but root-bound and in need of root pruning and we're going to put it in the same bonsai pot it was in--that's re-potting. No matter which of these we're doing, we're going to be doing something to the root system of the tree. For many beginners, this is a very scary proposition and if they've never done it, terrifying. So they check out a book from the library and read up on the subject. My advice if you do this is to sit down with a LARGE shaker of salt, because this advice from books is to be taken with more than just a grain of salt. If you consult an older book the information is likely outdated and if followed might result in the death of your tree. Barerooting is a terms that surfaces in the older references that should not be bandied about lightly! Those with little experience take their root work way too far and do more damage to the tree than good. This is a common experience starting out and most kill

their first trees potting or re-potting them.

I have been studying with Michael Hagedorn since his return from Japan and he drills this into our heads each year around this time at study group sessions. Americans take root pruning way too far according to Michael, both with what we remove in the way of soil and how we remove it. Some species can tolerate bare-rooting, like elms and trident maples. The nursery trade bareroots saplings all the time to reduce weight and volume for shipping. But because we can doesn't mean we have to. I went through a phase of doing this because I saw it being done in one of the forums on the internet. I lost a lot of trees this way! If you are just starting out in bonsai and even if you have a few years under your belt, I would suggest you try to get in line to substitute for one of the members already in a study group, attend the mentorship group session for this, or if there's an opening in one of our area study groups, join up! Michael Hagedorn runs study groups, Ryan Neil has a program for pine and juniper bonsai, Joe Harris teaches a study group out Boring way and David DeGroot from the Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection near Seattle comes to PDX for a study group as well. That's four I can think of just off the top of my head. Don't be in the dark about this!

A quick word about our Holiday Party--Success! Yes, very unpolished I admit but we pulled it off. There are so many people I'd like to thank for their help I'll keep it general. One thing I think has surfaced and seems to be working is that people are pitching in and helping more with an event that in the past has been relegated to VP/programs. I'm hoping next year will be even better and we can push with the momentum we got this year. We don't usually have a program for January because it's all about business. But this year all board members are installed and we've got room to squeeze Alan Taft in with his version of bonsai 'tool time'. He's even going to throw in a little bit about keeping those tools sharp, too! Here's hoping your new year is going well--C U @ the meeting!

*Greg*

## BSOP MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

I hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We have not had a mentorship meeting since November when our own Lyle Feilmeier provided an excellent and informative talk on identification and treatment of pests and diseases affecting our trees.

Our next meeting is scheduled for February 18th and will be about soils, soil porosity and of course we will be making Boon Mix. There is a charge for materials for this offering and an RSVP is required. By the time of our January BSOP monthly meeting, I will have the location for the course identified.

Elsewhere in the **TREELINE** you will find the full schedule of all of the Mentorship Program course offerings for 2012. Everyone is invited to attend regardless of your skill level. Of course, I am always looking for additional experienced members to participate and share their knowledge and experience about Bonsai.

**CAUTION:** December was an extremely dry month. If you have not checked your trees recently and have them heeled in under bark dust or other mulch, be sure to water them. The lack of sufficient rain in December has left many nursery beds extremely dry. Also, if you have not yet done your dormant spraying, now is a great opportunity, with all of the leaves off of the trees to get this chore completed effectively and efficiently.

Finally, I look forward to see all of you either at the January BSOP meeting or a future Mentorship meetings. If you are new to the hobby of Bonsai or an old hand who would like to acquire or investigate a new technique or brush up on something you have not undertaken in a while, the BSOP Mentorship Program has something to offer to everyone. I look forward to see you there. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

*Keith*

## Library Highlights

At the November BSOP meeting, David DeGroot spoke about his recent trip to China, including his introduction to the “Lingnan” method of styling deciduous trees. I was fascinated! The rugged individualism of the trees caught my interest. Since then I have come across an article in our periodical library entitled “**Penjing, A Chinese Renaissance,**” by **Karin Albert** ([Bonsai Today Vol. 98, 2005/4](#)). “Aha!” I thought. “Context! Just what a library should provide to a student of this art.”

The vast nation of China apparently had several different schools of bonsai, each with its own aesthetic and technique. So much of this art was lost in the tragedy of the Cultural Revolution; but now China seems to be enthusiastically pursuing a rebirth of its ancient culture. I hope that this vibrant nation will one day provide the world with a fresh look at bonsai. I think I will add a cross-reference in the Periodical Index for “Chinese bonsai” and keep my eyes open for more articles on this topic.

For those interested in the Chinese styles, our library contains the following books on the subject:

- Lesniewicz, Ilona, and Zhimin, Li: [Chinese Bonsai—The Art of Penjing](#)
- Yunhua, Hu: [Penjing, The Chinese Art of Miniature Gardens](#)
- In addition, there are wonderful photographs of Lingnan-style trees in “**A Penjing Winter—The Trees of Zelin Zhang,**” in **Bonsai (BCI) 2003-Jan-Feb.**
- For more information about Penjing in our periodical collection, see Liu Hong's “**Appreciating the Art of Chinese Penjing,**” in **Bonsai (BCI) 2003-Jan-Feb,** and Karin Albert's “**China's Literati—The Cultural Context of Penjing,**” in **Bonsai Today 2006-Jan-Feb Vol. 101.**
- Also, be sure to check the listings in the [Periodical Index](#) under “Techniques: Styles: Penjing.”

*Karen VanKannon*

# Oregon Shohin Kai

HAPPY NEW YEAR from OSK!

The Oregon Shohin Kai started the new year with a very good group, all bringing their shohin-in-training for discussion of their design. Alan Taft was the meeting leader this month, talking about and demonstrating bonsai/shohin design ranging from just a light trimming to major branch removal. Everyone went home with new shohin design ideas and care instructions, both specific and general. Thank you, Alan, for sharing with OSK at the January program.

The February meeting will be on the second Saturday, in order to allow several of our members to attend the California Shohin Society convention on the first weekend. If you want more information on this convention, contact Jan Hettick. For the February program, Alan Taft will return to demonstrate grafting on a juniper and to continue discussion of design. The pots made in December should be ready for glaze at the February meeting too. See you on February 11th!

*Notum*



Hans van Meer's 13.2 inch hawthorne

## 2012 MENTORSHIP CALENDAR

(All Classes are Saturday from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 pm)

**February 18th** -- Soil Porosity discussion and Make your own "Boon Mix" (**RSVP required**) There is a **charge for materials** for this class. Location of this program will be determined shortly.

**March 17th** -- Bare Rooting, Root Pruning and Repotting -- Selecting the right method to achieve your primary objective. Whack and Chat, bring your own trees. St Philip Neri Catholic Church.

**April 14th** -- Wire -- Wiring -- Styling-- Whack and Chat -- (**RVSP Required**) St. Philip Neri Catholic Church., with Lee Cheatle, Keith Wingfield and others.

**May 19th** -- Fertilizer (Organic vs. Chemical) Do's and Don'ts (What is best for what purpose) - Making POO Balls. (**RSVP required**) There is **charge for materials** for this class. Again this year our host will be Scott Tice, details and directions to follow.

**June 16th** -- Field Trip based on group Interest. Locations currently under consideration: Wee Tree Farm; Telperion Farms; Tsugawa Nursery; Randy Knight; Isle Nursery. Other suggestion are invited.

**July and August**-- NO MEETING

**September 15** -- Autumn Care and Fertilizing -- Pots and Pot Selection -- Whack and Chat, bring your own trees. Presenters to be arranged. St Philip Neri Catholic Church

**October 20** -- Carving Jin and Shari -- Tools, Uses and Care -- Whack and Chat -- Bring your own Trees. St. Philip Neri Catholic Church. Presenters to be arranged.

**November 17** --Winter Preparation and Protection -- Advanced Preparation for Spring 2013 -- Whack and Chat. St. Philip Neri Catholic Church. Presenters to be arranged.

**December** - NO MEETING

The Goals of the Mentorship Program are to offer opportunities for both new and experienced members to:

1. Quickly increase their skills and the quality of their trees;
2. Help integrate new members into the club by providing a casual setting outside of the monthly Society meeting where they can interact with more experienced members;
3. Help experienced members refine their skills and share their knowledge with less experience members.

*Keith*



A couple trees at the Bonsai Pavilion at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park, San Diego CA

## In Our Own Backyard (#1, Jan 2012)

This is an introduction to what I hope will be a continuing series of interviews with BSOP members. We are a large and successful organization with a continuing influx of new members. I think this series may help those newcomers learn about the wonderful people in the Society. One reason I have enjoyed being part of BSOP is the opportunity to meet people from a wide range of professional backgrounds—multifaceted people with a can-do volunteer spirit. Membership in BSOP has enriched my life, and I would like to make this series of interviews a celebration of the contributions of the membership to bonsai and to Portland.

Each interview will be a portrait in miniature, just a glimpse into the bright constellation of stars that make up the Bonsai Society of Portland. The first one should appear in the February edition of the newsletter. I hope you will enjoy getting to know each other better. We can all benefit from the sharing of experiences in the art of bonsai. I already have one regret—I can only interview one person per month, and there are so, so many of you with whom I'd love to meet! Well, bonsai teaches patience...

*Karen VunKannon*



## Recycle

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.

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Dave & Donna Burnett

Need supplies?

Call ahead for delivery at BSOP meetings.



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**

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