MISSION

The National Bonsai Foundation is a section 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established in 1982 to sustain the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum. It collaborates with the U.S. National Arboretum to offer financial support and counsel to the Museum.

This private/public collaboration between the Foundation and the Arboretum enables the Museum to promote the art of bonsai and penjing to visitors through masterpiece displays and educational programs while also fostering intercultural friendship and understanding.

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY

Here is a sneak peek of one of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum’s newest acquisitions: a 150-year-old buttonwood donated to care of the Museum by the CIA.

The buttonwood is currently hiding out in the Museum, where the staff is “declassifying” (preparing for public display) the tree.
Dear Friends of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum

As we go to print with our 2019 Annual Report, we would be remiss not to pause on what is happening in the world around COVID-19. So much of what we’ve seen already in 2020 is everything we strive to keep in balance at the National Bonsai Foundation (NBF). As chaos, fear, sickness, and separation sweep our world, we think of the calm, peace, health benefits, and unity that bonsai offers humanity. As we face an uncertain future together, we find comfort in revisiting the successes of 2019 and find hope as we plan for the future.

A principal focus of NBF during 2019 was to make progress toward needed capital improvements to the Museum. Thanks to a generous gift from Milton and Rosalind Chang, NBF retained Reed+Hilderbrand and Trahan Architects and worked with U.S. National Arboretum Director Dr. Richard Olsen and his staff to develop a master plan to re-envision key Museum structures, including the John Y. Naka North American Pavilion, the Yee-sun Wu Chinese Pavilion, the Yoshimura Center staff worksite, and a new Viewing Stone and Exhibits Gallery.

We will be moving ahead in 2020 with fundraising efforts and the preparation of construction drawings to carry out the new master plan. This will involve a major renovation of the Museum to help in its preservation as a national treasure.

In August, the Museum entered into a formal “Sister Museum” relationship with the Omiya Bonsai Art Museum in Saitama City, Japan. Dr. Richard Olsen signed an agreement with the Honorable Hayato Shimizu, mayor of Saitama City, in a ceremony at the Arboretum attended by a large delegation of Japanese officials and invited guests. This new relationship will enable us to increase awareness of both museums as premier destinations to experience and elevate appreciation for the art.

With continuing support from Barbara Hall Marshall and her family, NBF expanded funding for the Museum’s successful outreach programs to expose even more visitors to bonsai and penjing. Offerings included yoga, meditation, tai chi, drawing, and forest bathing. Each class concluded with a special tour of the Museum.

Thanks in large part to these events, as well as our regular blog postings, we saw many wins for our communications strategy. Both NBF and the Museum were featured in numerous media outlets throughout the year, including The Washington Post, WTTG Fox5, Washingtonian Magazine, WHUT, Road Trippers Magazine, and more.

From October 26 through November 17, the Museum hosted a retrospective exhibit of work by revered bonsai artist Nick Lenz. With funding from NBF, Twisted Genius: The Eccentric Bonsai Artistry of Nick Lenz featured ceramics and bonsai in a thought-provoking display. The exhibit was conceived by Curator Michael James and bonsai artist Owen Reich and curated by Museum Specialist Kathleen Emerson-Dell to introduce a new generation to Lenz’s singular take on American bonsai.

We at NBF are proud to be in partnership with the U.S. National Arboretum to assure that the Museum remains the finest place in America to view and appreciate the beauty and wonder of bonsai, penjing, and related art forms. We rejoice in knowing that the Museum is, as Washington City Paper readers put it, the “Best Place to Bring an Out-of-Towner.” Your ongoing support of the National Bonsai Foundation and the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum makes this all possible.

Please enjoy this Annual Report as it takes you on a pictorial stroll of a few of the majestic bonsai of the Museum.

With deepest gratitude,

Felix Laughlin
NBF Co-President

Jack Sustic
NBF Co-President
NATIONAL BONSAI FOUNDATION
BOARD & STAFF

The National Bonsai Foundation’s Board of Directors and Executive Director work to achieve our mission and promote the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum throughout the United States and the world.

The NBF Board of Directors includes representatives from across the country and is supported by one full-time staff person. Together they advance the art of bonsai nationwide and foster global friendship and understanding by commending “peace through bonsai.”

But amid declining federal funding, the fate of the world’s first public bonsai museum rests on generous support from the private sector. The Board and staff’s utmost priority is to raise funds on behalf of the Museum so its rich history is preserved, its peerless legacy is protected, and a future is prepared for a new generation to appreciate the gift of a small tree in a pot.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
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Co-President
Marybel Balendonck, CA
Vice President
Dr. Carl Morimoto, CA
Vice President
Mr. Daniel Angelucci, MI
Secretary
Mr. James Brant, PA
Treasurer

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Mr. Kazuo Moriyama, Japan
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Mrs. Janice Vitale, VA
Mr. Stephen Voss, DC
Mr. Jack Wells, FL
Mrs. Jane Yamashiro, HI

IN MEMORIAM
Solita Rosade was a dedicated board member of the National Bonsai Foundation and a tireless champion of bonsai art and preservation. She is remembered by her husband, F. Chase Rosade, an NBF honorary director, and the worldwide bonsai community.
NATIONAL ARBORETUM
& MUSEUM STAFF

Museum staff wear many important hats: caring for the invaluable bonsai and penjing collections, designing innovative educational programs, and representing the Museum to the public. They are truly the face of this Museum and our trees, and each visitor’s experience rests in their hands.

“Unlike ephemeral, seasonal displays of riotous color and texture in our flower borders, bonsai transcend fleeting flowers and fads and enthrall across all seasons and ages.”

Dr. Richard T. Olsen
Director

Mr. Michael James
Curator

Ms. Kathleen Emerson-Dell
Museum Specialist

Ms. Erin Holden
Gardener

OLD AND NEW
The Museum staff care for trees that have been in the collection since the Museum’s founding as well as new acquisitions like this Cork Bark Chinese Elm, generously donated in 2019 by Melvyn C. Goldstein.

WITH CARE
Curator Michael James leads apprentice Andrew Bello in repotting Goshin, the Chinese juniper forest bonsai. Mr. James leads volunteers and staff in all aspects of bonsai care and maintenance, including training, potting, and soil nutrition.
The SPIRIT of BONSAI

We return to the Museum for a long-awaited stroll among the bonsai.

Words from bonsai master
Saburo Kato
The first-time observer of bonsai is fascinated seeing what could be a large tree in a miniature size. His or her imagination can be led on endless journeys to mystical places: old-growth forests, windswept cliffs, or lush, green valleys.
The enthusiast is eventually captivated by experiencing the beauty of nature through the rhythm of another living thing whose life span can exceed our own.
A close bond develops between the caregiver and the bonsai. In return for the caregiver’s love, the bonsai portrays the utmost beauty of nature. The love one has for bonsai then expands to encompass nature in all its many forms.

This is the Spirit of Bonsai.
MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS & APPRENTICESHIP

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS
The Museum’s many bonsai and penjing require constant care—and we are endlessly fortunate to have a team of dedicated volunteers who assist the Museum staff with this important work. Through their collective skill in the art of bonsai and gardening, our collections not only thrive today but are preserved for future generations to enjoy.

Jennifer Amundsen
Ross Campbell
Young Choe
Olivia Cook
Chuck Croft
LeAnn Duling
Sachiko Furlan
Brian Gottlieb
Joseph Gutierrez
Dick Hammerschlag
Richard Kang
David Lieu
Stephanie Mark
Julie Pascu
Theodore Pickett
Steve Smith
Akiko Sprague
Lori Sullivan
Janice Vitale
Alexander Voorhies
Richard Winchester

THE FIRST CURATOR’S APPRENTICESHIP
The First Curator’s Apprenticeship supports the Museum and aims to train the next generation of bonsai leadership. The position was established in 2011 to honor Robert Drechsler, the first curator of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum. A grant from Toyota Motor North America and the Sally Foss and James Scott Hill Foundation financed the 2019 apprenticeship.

Andrew Bello, an Illinois native with a passion for horticulture, was the 2019 First Curator’s Apprentice. After his apprenticeship, Andrew temporarily served as a U.S. National Arboretum agricultural research science technician. He started as the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum’s assistant curator in June 2020.

“I am extremely grateful to the National Bonsai Foundation and the Arboretum for offering this amazing, one-of-a-kind opportunity to further my skills as a bonsai professional. I am grateful to Toyota and the Hill Foundation for their generous support of this position. My life and career path have benefited immensely from my experience, and I will be forever thankful to all involved in the process.”

— Andrew Bello

Sister Museum Declaration

On August 5, 2019, the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum, located at the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, DC, officially became a “Sister Museum” to Omiya Bonsai Art Museum of Saitama City, Japan.
EXHIBITS & PROGRAMS

Our ever-changing schedule of Museum exhibits and programs helps us reach new, diverse audiences.

NBF provides financial support for the bonsai exhibits that are displayed in the Mary E. Mrose Exhibits Gallery, as well as related events and programs held throughout the Museum. We also publicize exhibits and events through media outreach, the NBF website, social media, and Museum Messages—our monthly e-newsletter featuring Museum updates, class and workshop schedules, bonsai history, blog content, and more.

Sakura Orihon
Diary of a Cherry Blossom Journey
FEB. 16 – APR. 7, 2019

Tai Chi & Bonsai
APR. 7, MAY 5, SEPT. 8, OCT. 6, and NOV. 3, 2019

Ikebana International Exhibit
Spring Flowers with a Japanese Twist!
APR. 12 – 22, 2019

Mindfulness Amongst the Bonsai
APR. 14, JUNE 9, and NOV. 10, 2019

Forest Bathing in the Collections
APR. 18 and OCT. 19, 2019

Yoga & Bonsai
APR. 20, MAY 25, JUNE 22, SEPT. 28, and OCT. 12, 2019

Potomac Bonsai Association Festival
MAY 3 – 5, 2019

World Bonsai Day
MAY 11, 2019

Sketching in the National Collections
MAY 18 and SEPT. 14, 2019

Bonsai Bling: Azalea Bonsai in Bloom
MAY 25 – JUNE 2, 2019

National Symphony Orchestra Chamber Concert
JUNE 1, 2019

Nick Lenz Exhibition
Featuring trees from many private collections, the exhibition highlighted well-known themes in the Nick Lenz oeuvre, including whimsy, drama, and wilderness.

Sogetsu Ikebana Exhibit
JUNE 20 – 23, 2019

Spirit of Literati Exhibit
In collaboration with Potomac Viewing Stone Group
JULY 7 – SEPT. 29, 2019

Introduction to Bonsai with Curator Michael James
JULY 13 – 14 and JULY 27 – 28, 2019

Twisted Genius
The Eccentric Bonsai Artistry of Nick Lenz
OCT. 26 – NOV. 17, 2019

Children’s Workshop
Will It Be a Bonsai or a Big Tree?
NOV. 16, 2019

DIGITAL MEDIA STATISTICS

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<th>Email Subscribers</th>
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</table>
DONORS

Thank you for your gift, and we look forward to working with you in 2020.

Without donations to NBF, the Museum could not make claim to be one of the finest museums in the world for this art form. These are all of the donors who have given so generously in support of the Museum.

Guardian of the Future
Over $50,000
Marybel Balendonck, CA
Edward & Lynn Fabian, FL
Barbara Hall Marshall, MO
Deborah Rose, MD
Jacquelyn & William Sheehan, MD
In Memory of
Janet Lanman
Toyota Motor North America

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Felix Laughlin, NC
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Brandywine Bonsai Society
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Jack Douhitt, WI
Peter Dreyfliner, HI
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Margaret Holton, WA
George Hutson, FL
Chin Fun & Florence Kwok, VA
Brussel Martin, MS
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Theodore & Mary Eugenia Myer, ME
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Jack Rubenstein, VA
Marilyn Stevenson, CA
Leland Vanderpool, FL
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Alan & Kathy Walker, LA

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Archelei Morelli, MD
Thekla Morris, FL
Ray Nagatoshi, CA
Boto Nakanishi, HI
Network for Good
Cesar Portocarrero, MD

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Pierre Ruffieux, MD
Steven Schram, NC
Bradley Smith, DC
Susquehanna Bonsai Club
William Valavanis, NY
Warren Yamamoto, HI

Benefactor, $500 – $999
American Bonsai Society – Houston Convention
Kenneth Azuma, CA
Donna Banting, LA
Robert Blumenstein, VA
Robert Ellis, PA
Jim Greaves, CA
Dennis Hoffman, WI
Peter & Clare Kearney, MD
Wynne Keller, ME
Michael & Lenetta Knowlton, FL
William & Karen Krouse, IL
Nancy Morgan, WV
Alfred Morrison, MD
Melody Owens, NY
Barbara Paege, MI
Julie Pasco, MD
Pennsylvania Bonsai Society
Sara Rayner Alms, MN
Margo Reynolds, NJ
Seiji & Della Shiba, CA
Akiko Sprague, DC
Lloyd Timblin, CO
E. Godfrey Trammel, Jr., MD
Elaine White, TX
Diane Winters, CA

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Frank & Kathi Maisano, FL
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Anthony Meyer, OR
Harry Miller, NM
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Sandra Moore, MD
Al Nelson, CA
Northern Virginia Bonsai Society
Richard Otsuji, CA
Roger & Margaret Pazzuti, ME
Nancy Suzuki, HI
Steven Vojta, MD
Nancy Yogi, HI
Kiyoko Yoneda, CA

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Ken & Joyce Buechele, NC
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William Faquin, MA
Freddy Felix, VA
Mark Fields, IN
Eric Gibber, MA
Karen Gladding, DC
Stephen Janick & Russell Group
A. Michael Richman, CA
Northern Virginia Bonsai Society
James H Caucasian, MD
Patron, $250 – $999
American Bonsai Society – Houston Convention
Kenneth Azuma, CA
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Robert Ellis, PA
Jim Greaves, CA
Dennis Hoffman, WI
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Wynne Keller, ME
Michael & Lenetta Knowlton, FL
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Mark Fields, IN
Eric Gibber, MA
Karen Gladding, DC
Stephen Janick & Russell Group
A. Michael Richman, CA
Northern Virginia Bonsai Society
James H Caucasian, MD

Friend, $25 – $99
Katsumi Arms, MI
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Alan Estrada, CT
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Mid-Michigan Bonsai Club
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Shirley Quan, CA
Diane Raynes, DC
In Honor of Ross Campbell
A. Michael Richman, CA
Paul Savage, UT
Leonard Schwartz, NJ
Carola Seiz, VA
Karim Simmat, PA
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James Stopfer, NY

Friend, $25 – $99
Katsumi Arms, MI
Shila Bello, IL
Chris Corbett, VA
Yvonney Dailey, MD
Alan Estrada, CT
Jennifer Hatcher, VA
Margaret Hilton, MD
Trevor Keller, MD
Howard Lambert, IL
Hugh Livengood, DC
John Maiorca, CO
Steven Meyer, IL
Brendy Piper, CA
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Charles Shyrock, MD
Steve Smith, VA
Share Solow, PA
Larry Stephon, IL
Joan Sweet, MD
Samantha Symon-Rubicoff, VA
Michael Voss, CA
Mickey & Richard Walker, NC
Simon Wibowo, CA
Lois Yu, TN
Marc Zimmerman, MA
FINANCIALS 2019

NBF strives for the best possible stewardship of your gifts. We are pleased to report that donations increased in 2019, and while expenses also increased from 2018, much of this was spent on design planning for improvements to the Museum.

Revenue, Gains & Other Support 2019

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<th>Description</th>
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Net Changes in Net Assets

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PRESERVING A HISTORY.

PROTECTING A LEGACY.

PREPARING A FUTURE.

Stay with us on our journey to safeguard the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum — your museum.

Visit the Museum at the U.S. National Arboretum 3501 New York Avenue NE Washington, D.C. 20002

Connect www.bonsai-nbf.org @NBFbonsai

For your reference
Goshin, Chinese juniper forest, John Naka — cover, back cover & page 11
Japanese black pine, Stanley Chinn — page 9
Chinese elm, Stanley Chinn — page 11
Yamaki Pine, Japanese white pine ‘Miyajima,’ Masaru Yamaki — pages 13 & 16
Japanese yew, Reiji Takagi — page 14
Aronense azalea ‘Kumiko,’ Robert Drechsler — page 15
Sargent juniper, Kenichi Oguchi — facing page (the beautiful tree that inspired the Museum’s logo)
Sustaining and advocating for the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum at the U.S. National Arboretum

Goshin, the world-famous forest bonsai, by John Naka in the Museum’s North American Pavilion. (cover)