



# the **TREE LINE**

the official monthly  
publication of the

**BONSAI SOCIETY of PORTLAND**

## Upcoming Events

May  
2024

### Monthly Meetings:

May 28 6-9 pm BSOP Monthly Meeting, Master Ceramic artist, Mr. Kakuzan,  
Tokoname, Japan

June 9 9:00-1:00 Mentorship 101 Lab, Oregon Grape Room, Milwaukie Center

June 9 1:30-3:30 Mentorship 102 Lab, Oregon Grape Room, Milwaukie Center

June 23 8:00-4:00 Spring Show at Portland Nursery

June 25 6:00-9:00 BSOP Monthly Meeting, Bill Valavanis

July 7 1:30-3:30 Mentorship 102 Lab, Oregon Grape Room, Milwaukie Center

July 21 9:00-12:00 Summer Swap Meet, Milwaukie Center Picnic Area

### Greetings BSOP,

I hope everyone is doing okay after that early dose of heat. I had to rush to get shade cloth up here at RAKUYŌ to prevent leaves from burning in the early heat. As long as trees are under some protection they should have enjoyed the warm weather. New growth on my trees is starting to harden off and lignify.

It's also the time of year to start thinking about getting any tropicals outside if you haven't done so already. Just be sure to ease their transition to sun so they don't burn. And if you aren't already start fertilizing to capitalize on the late spring growth.

I'm looking forward to the rest of our BSOP Programs until summer, Ben has some great things in store for us. Also October is approaching us and planning for the Pacific Bonsai Expo in Oakland, California is underway. Mark October 26-27 on your calendars, this year's expo will be at the historic Kaiser Center for the Arts on Lake Merritt adjacent to the Oakland Art Museum.

This is the nation's finest exhibition of bonsai art, and the country's best selection of vendors at a bonsai event. Last expo several BSOP members exhibited trees and received prizes, and dozens of members came out. We hope to see many of you again at this year's expo! For more information see <https://pacificbonsaiexpo.org/>

Cheers, *Andrew Robson* BSOP President

# BSOP Programs Update May 2024

Greetings BSOP Members,

I want to start by thanking all the volunteers that made the April general meeting a success. The “ten ring circus” (as coined by our own Lee Cheatle) would not be possible without the dedication and commitment of our members to make it all possible. If you want to get involved but don’t know how, just stick around at the end of the meeting, we can always use help resetting the room, and it’s a great way to meet other members.

For the April meeting, we hosted John Eads, a longtime BSOP member and owner of Left Coast Bonsai. He presented a program on advancing bonsai cultivation. I don’t think anyone left the meeting without at least one lesson to apply to their collection. If you are interested in learning more from John, please visit his website for upcoming workshops, or just say hi at a meeting. He is a wealth of knowledge and we are thankful to have him present for us.

Coming up for our May program, we have a very special guest who we are hosting in partnership with Nao and Mary Tokutake, without whom this would not have been possible. Kakuyuki Watanabe, known by his potter name as Kakuzan, is a fourth generation bonsai potter who has hand crafted bonsai pots for over 50 years from his studio, Kakuzan Toen, based in Tokoname Japan. He is joining us for two events in May.

May General Meeting – Kakuzan will be demonstrating his ceramic skills in a live demonstration where he will be making a bonsai ceramic. Not only is this going to be an exquisite demonstration, but we will also be raffling off the completed container at the end of the meeting. We will have more specifics of the raffle at the meeting, but be sure to attend for a chance to win!

May Workshops - We have two days of workshops on May 25-26. These workshops are sold out, but if you were lucky enough to grab a seat in a workshop, please pay attention to the time/date/location for your workshop. Kakuzan will be guiding participants in the creation of their own pots, which will later be fired by Nao Tokutake. This is sure to be an unforgettable workshop and each participant will come away with a lasting treasure for their collection.

We are getting towards the end of spring, and we have had such an inspiring assortment of presentations in 2024, with more on the way. I am thrilled to be able to bring this outstanding programming to BSOP members and share it with you all. Mark your calendars, and make sure you don’t miss out!

Best regards, *Benjamin MacBeth*, [vp-programs@portlandbonsai.org](mailto:vp-programs@portlandbonsai.org)

## THE BSOP SPRING SHOW IS COMING UP!

The BSOP Spring Show, hosted by Portland Nursery, is a little over a month away! The show will take place on Sunday, June 23 at the Portland Nursery - Division location. Setup begins at 8am, and teardown starts at 4pm. All members are welcome to display trees at this informal display (you don’t need a stand or accent). It is a great chance to show off your hard work with the chance to win a Portland Nursery gift card if your tree is awarded!

Please RSVP if you plan on showing one or more trees on our Sign Up Genius page; <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0445ADA62BA3FB6-bsops#/> The RSVP will ask for the number of participants and the number of trees each participant will bring to display ( add # under comments).

If you plan on attending without showing a tree, no RSVP is necessary. Due to the informal nature of the show and lack of space, there will be no vendor area at the Spring Show.

We would also greatly appreciate volunteers to help keep an eye on trees and answer any questions that may come up. Help spread the word about BSOP to the Portland community! Please select a convenient two hour shift on the Sign Up Genius. Thank You!

Any Questions should be directed to our Spring Show Chair, Ben MacBeth at; [vp-programs@portlandbonsai.org](mailto:vp-programs@portlandbonsai.org)

# Spring Bonsai Show

Sunday June 23 2024

10am - 4pm

Portland Nursery - Division  
9000 SE Division St.

Show your tree, view bonsai displays, and  
browse the nursery

Registration begins at 8am

PORTLAND  
NURSERY



BONSAI SOCIETY  
of PORTLAND

# The Raffle It's Back!

The Raffle is returning to the upcoming May 28th monthly meeting. Members will receive one free raffle ticket when you pick up your name tag at the membership table. Additional tickets can be purchased for \$1 each in the raffle area (Cash Only).

The Raffle will be located next to Hospitality to the right of the stage. Head over and check out the tables displaying raffle prizes. Write your name or member number on the back of your tickets. Choose the item you would like to win and put one of the tickets in the white bucket by that prize. Keep the matching ticket. Winners will be drawn after the program break. Please check in the raffle area after the program to see if you are a winner and claim your prize!

**DONATIONS NEEDED:** Bring your unneeded bonsai items to donate to the raffle! Donations may be anything bonsai-related: seedlings, raw tree material, accent plants, tools, wire, pots, books, etc.

See you there!

*Patty Myrick*

## BSOP Library News

I've been involved with the BSOP library for many years, since the time it consisted of a number of boxes stored in the basement at St. Philip Neri church. Unfortunately, the boxes were so heavy we could barely get them up the narrow stairs without help from some of the stronger members! We got lucky when we found the Milwaukie Center, who offered us permanent space on the stage behind the back curtain. Once we got the cabinets and got the books organized and shelved, library usage took off. Books have been color coded and filed by author within each category.

We have acquired updated software and a list of books has been added to the club website. You can review the list and submit reservations from the website, too. New books are purchased as they become available, making our total well over 1,300 items including a complete sets of Bonsai Today/Bonsai Focus and International Bonsai magazines.

Many thanks to Barbara Devitt and Karen VunKannon who managed the library until a few years ago. We would not be where we are now without them. Now it is time for me to retire, too.

The club has been very fortunate that Michael Babbit has agreed to step up as Head Librarian. He is the one you see taking care of check out-check in at the meetings, and the one you would talk to if you have a question. The library is open by 6:00 before each meeting, and closes at 6:45pm to give the program presenters time to set up. I have enjoyed working on the library (and on a few other committees over the years), and will miss it. But Michael has been great to train for the job and will be a fantastic Head Librarian!

*Jan Hettick*

**Jan** ([janhettick@comcast.net](mailto:janhettick@comcast.net)) and **Michael** ([mikexc@msn.com](mailto:mikexc@msn.com))



**BONSAI SOCIETY OF PORTLAND**



**Milwaukie Center Pavilion**

5440 S.E. Kellogg Creek Drive  
Milwaukie, OR 97222

More details at [portlandbonsai.org](http://portlandbonsai.org)  
Set up begins at 8 am.

# BSOP Treeline Submission for May 2024 Summer Swap Meet

We are thrilled to announce our next club swap meet on Sunday, July 21st, from 9am-Noon! This is one of our most exciting club events of the year, and is a great opportunity to buy, sell, and trade any and all things bonsai related. We will meet at the Milwaukie Center Pavilion, across the parking lot from the main building where our monthly meetings are held.

Participants are welcome to bring starter material, refined trees, pottery, supplies, and anything else related to our hobby. You do not need to be a member to participate, so this is a great place for beginners and seasoned hobbyists to meet and learn from each other. There will be materials at the event from all over our area, so don't miss out on a chance to get your hands on some new and interesting supplies.

There will be snacks and beverages available (donations encouraged to help support our fantastic hospitality team) and we will be doing informal demos throughout the day with Lee Cheatle, Scott Elser, Brandon McMullin, and more.

Vendors are encouraged to bring anything they need for setup, including tables, but we will have a very limited number of tables available for rent for \$5 each. You are not required to pay any fees or percentage of sales to the club (other than table rental if needed), so bring what you have, don't be shy.

If you plan on attending, let us know by checking in with <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0445ADA62BA3FB6-49585582-bsop#/> here. It's not required, but it will give the organizers a way to make sure we have enough space (and snacks) for everyone. You can also use the form to ask any questions. Our events rely on our community to be successful, and that cooperation is why we're the largest (and I'd argue the best) club in the country. See you there.



Juniper no. 63  
bonsaimirai.com

# How to Build Grow Boxes

Marty Weiser, Inland Empire Bonsai Society

You can build grow boxes from just about any available lumber. Rot resistant wood will hold up better than easily rotted wood, but it is best to avoid wood that is treated with preservatives, particularly those for ground contact. On the other hand, I treat my grow boxes with oil-based deck stain to promote longer life and preserve the wood color and have not seen any issues (I let them dry in the sun for at least a week before use).

My favorite material for most grow boxes is 1x6 cedar fence boards. They used to be about  $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick but are now about  $\frac{9}{16}$ ". I use both new boards and reclaimed ones when neighbors have replaced their fences. For larger grow boxes (>18" and up to 36+") I use 2x stock – redwood when I could get it since it resists decay, but standard hem/fir when I can't. Another option is 5/4 x 6 cedar deck boards that are a full 1" thick. Finally, solid composite decking can be used, but it is not as stiff as wood, and I have not used it.

It is important to build the boxes so they do not flex and damage the roots when the box is moved. That is one of the reasons to use thicker material as the box size increases. It is also important to strongly connect the corners. I like to cut a 45-degree miter at the corner and use a combination of waterproof glue and fasteners from both sides of the corner. If you cannot cut the miters, then a butt joint is good – have the longer sides of the box run through with the shorter side butting into it.

I use narrow crown pneumatic staples\* for the thinner walled boxes, but 4d galvanized nails are a good alternative. You may want to predrill holes a little undersized for the nails to prevent splitting. For thicker materials, I pneumatic staple or nail to hold them together and then come back with 6d galvanized nails or exterior screws to hold them together. Once again, I predrill to avoid splitting. I have even been known to counterbore and plug the screw holes in the 2x redwood boxes so they look a bit more like pots. A final point is that I install the fasteners so they are at an angle to the end grain of the side into which they are driven to increase the holding power.

Finally, what should you use for the bottom of the box? I like to use 8 wires per inch galvanized wire screen (often known as hardware cloth) with 2 or 3 narrow wood strips across the bottom to serve as feet and support the mesh. For larger boxes I have used 4 wire per inch galvanized wire screen. The large open area of this material allows great drainage and oxygen exchange. I like to think of boxes made with the wire mesh as colanders with solid sides since they promote aggressive growth. When placed on the ground the roots can grow through the mesh and then be cut loose at the end of the season to keep the root mass in the box.

One of the most common bottom materials is 3 to 5.5" wide wood slats with  $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$ " gaps that are covered with screen. This also promotes good water and oxygen exchange but prevents the soil from drying as fast as a mesh bottom. It is also stiffer and less apt to sag than the mesh and is therefore useful for larger boxes. It and plywood are both very useful for newly collected material since it is often grown in pure pumice which dries quite quickly.



The third material is exterior grade plywood with drainage holes. This is most like a bonsai pot and most useful when you want to refine the tree but are still searching for the correct pot. I suggest using several 1" diameter holes to ensure good drainage and coating the plywood with exterior spar varnish to protect it from rot. I replaced the bottom of an imported ceramic pot that broke during shipping this way and it is going strong after 3 years.

Can you have too many grow boxes? Yes, if you don't have room to store them or will no longer have trees in that size range. I have sold/given away quite a few grow boxes that were 24" and larger since I have fewer trees in that size range (some have been moved into smaller bonsai pots after they developed). On the other hand, it is good to have a range of sizes since you never know what great trees might come your way.

The image on the left is a box with wood slats and 8 mesh wire covering the gaps which are a bit wider than most. A nice feature is that there is a mesh covered gap at the ends of the box to prevent a cold, wet area. The one on the right is a mesh bottom box that has been used in the past.



\*Pneumatic staples and nails can deviate from their intended path without warning. They will penetrate your fingers (including bone) almost as well as the wood. Make sure your fingers are well out of the way when using these tools.





Ulmus parviflora 'Seiju'  
Above and right



Chinese elms are growing fast now. Two examples of how they can be developed..



Tsuru Island Japanese garden

**Haiku**

Cold winds blowing rain  
Or blazing sun stifling heat  
Still floral triumph

**PRE-BONSAI PLANTS · BONSAI TOOLS**  
High-fired Pots • Mica & Plastic Training Pots  
Wire • Organic Fertilizers  
Mazama Pumice (1/16-3/8")  
Diatomite Rock from Nevada, USA  
Superior Black Compost • Red Cinder Rock (1/4-5/16")

Est. 1978



25321 NE 72nd Avenue  
Battle Ground, WA 98604  
Phone (360) 687-5641  
D Burnett

Need supplies?  
Call ahead for delivery  
at BSOP meetings.



I'm protective of trees. In a Secret Service kind of way.

Jose Rivas champions the trees, landscapes and property investments of the customers in his care. And he's one of the many reasons we've become the premier scientific tree and shrub care company in the world.

503-722-7267 | bartlett.com/portland-or

**JOSE RIVAS, Arborist and Bartlett Champion**



**BARTLETT**  
TREE EXPERTS

SCIENTIFIC TREE CARE SINCE 1917

LTE #063  
The F.A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company

EVERY TREE NEEDS A CHAMPION.

## Portland Bonsai Supply



Order Online

Local Pickup, Delivery & Shipping  
Order Delivery at BSOP meetings



**Joshua Roth & Ryuga Tools**  
**Authorized Dealer**

Soils— Wire—Tools— Pots  
Supplies— Fertilizer



[portlandbonsaisupply.com](http://portlandbonsaisupply.com)



9240 SE Philips Place, Happy Valley, OR 97086

The Bonsai Society of Portland meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

**The Milwaukie Center**

**5440 SE Kellogg Creek Drive, Milwaukie OR 97222**

Enter parking lot from Rusk Road

Visitors are always welcome!

**Board of Directors**

President: Andrew Robson

2nd VP-Membership: Patrice Morrow

Secretary: Jeffrey Robson

1st VP-Programs: Ben MacBeth

Treasurer: Brandon McMullin

Past President: Joe Johanesen

**Committee Chairs**

Ambassador pro tem: Jeffrey Robson

Auctions: Dane Burrell, Toni Martin

Audio/Visual: Reid Parham

Facilities Coordinator: Brandon McMullin

Fall Show: Lee Cheatle

Formal Display: Scott Elser

Heritage: Steve Leaming

Hospitality:

Library: Jan Hettick, Michael Babbit

Mentorship: Joanne Raiton

Newsletter: Peter Pelofske

Portland Nursery Show Reid Parham

Photographer: Jim Baggett

Raffle:

Social Media: Scott Tice

Spring Show:

Summer Picnic:

Vendor Coordinator:

Volunteer Coordinator:

Webmaster: Karl Holmes

Contact information is on the BSOP website [www.portlandbonsai.org](http://www.portlandbonsai.org) under Services/Members Only/Membership Directory