



the **TREE LINE**

the official monthly
publication of the

BONSAI SOCIETY of PORTLAND

Upcoming Events

March
2020

March 24, 2020, 6pm-9pm, **BSOP Monthly Meeting, Cancelled**
April 5, 2020, 10am-1pm, **Mentorship 102, Cancelled**
April 26, 2020 10am-1pm, **Mentorship 101, Cancelled**
April 28, 2020 6pm-9pm, **BSOP Monthly Meeting**, Milwaukie Center
May 9, 2020, **World Bonsai Day**

BSOP March words from the President

Happy Spring everyone, trees are waking up and deciduous work is on the schedule for me. I hope you are all feeling well with all the cold, flu and Covid-19 virus going around.

With the concerns of Covid-19 and its spread, we decided to cancel the monthly meeting for March.

Be healthy and enjoy your bonsai, *Joe*

Programming Report

Thank you to Andrew Robson for our February lecture and presentation in which he explained good nebari (i.e. root flare) is created through years of meticulous work. He broke down the steps and techniques for selecting desirable, outward growing roots and taught us it is a practical, accessible process that doesn't require exotic approaches.

Andrew provided us with knowledge and inspiration that is appropriate for the season, which demonstrates the goals of BSOP programming — we focus on bonsai education and serve as a foundation to grow and strengthen our regional communities' love for the art.

Scheduled for our March 24 meeting is Will Baddeley from Ipswich, United Kingdom. Will has been doing bonsai for over 20 years and specializes in beautiful deadwood carving. He will show us how he produces interesting, natural looking features to enhance the beauty and value of bonsai.

On that same day, Will is leading a workshop for up to five lucky BSOP members who want to improve their wood carving skills. More information can be found in the member's section of our website and in regular all-member emails. If you're not receiving these useful

emails, then please check that your email address is correct in our membership directory.

Please look forward to these other 2020 BSOP presenters:

- Ryan Neil in April
- Jonas Dupiuch in May
- Todd Schlafer in October

Reid Parham, VP, Programming

BSOP'S ANNUAL FALL SHOW

October 17, 2020

You might think October is too far away to plan for showing a favorite tree, but it's not! This is a great opportunity to showcase a tree you're especially proud of. Please keep these simple guidelines in mind:

- This is the time to consider choosing a different pot, but please make sure your tree is in a bonsai pot.
- Starting now, pay closer attention to pruning, styling, and fertilizing your trees and protect them from sun, hail, or other elements over the next six months.
- Simple or more formal presentations are welcome, and all members are encouraged to participate!

Please feel free to contact Patrice Morrow at tm4170399@aol.com with any questions.

Mentorship 101

You could call it March Mentorship Madness! Once again we had a great time at the Mentorship class on March 8th. We worked with a Common Boxwood. Using the beautiful pots by Tony Hackenbruck, the repotting lesson turned out quite the winsome little tree. We even had a bit of a baby shower for Gabe Scheer, one of our students.

Six people on the waiting list got to substitute in the class with two people participating as silent observers. There were even two passers-by that were signed on as new members of the club. We tried a new method of teaching for the class that was brought to us by Lee Cheatle. It was a total success. All the students were able to absorb so much more knowledge. If you want to know what that was about, ask a student you know to explain it to you. I am sure they would love to talk about it. There were five mentors to help us on our way: Steve Wilcox, Howard Greisler, Roger Case, Lee Cheatle, and Joanne Raiton.

All members of BSOP are welcome to drop in or sign up on the waiting list at the BSOP website. We are usually able to pull substitutes from that group and an added benefit to signing up on the waiting list is that you will receive all of the student literature we use for the classes.

A big thank you to all the volunteers that make this a great program: the Mentors, Brandon McMullen for administration, Patrice Morrow for SUG management. A special thanks to all the students who show up early to help set up the room and then stay late to clean up. Working together, it's working.

Joanne Raiton

Mentorship 102

The monthly Mentorship 102 meeting took place, as usual, on the first Sunday of the month, March 1. BSOP is very fortunate to have such a program to foster both instruction and camaraderie. Bonsai clubs from around the country have asked our advice on how they too might initiate similar programs. This month's session this month included 22 attendees, 6 experienced instructors and a wide range of both deciduous and coniferous tree species. We worked on styling, pruning and repotting.

Thank you to the instructors who again participated this month - Howard Greisler, Lee Cheatle, Steve Wilcox, Roger Case, Joanne Raiton and Dennis Vojtilla. Steve Leaming was there offering tools, supplies and soils from Portland Bonsai Supply.

While the session was highly productive and ran smoothly, I would like to reiterate a few policies of Mentorship 102:

1. Set up begins at 9:30 but work on trees should not begin prior to 10:00. Mentors may not be actively teaching or working with trees before that time.
2. Attendees should bring ONLY one tree into the meeting room at a time. Additional trees should be stored outside by the wall of the Milwaukie Center or in cars. The popularity of the M102 program has increased, making space to work an issue.
3. No one should EVER touch anyone else's tree without the owner's permission.
4. It is assumed that in M102 attendees have the basic skills needed for a degree of independence. Mentors are there to advise, teach and assist, not to do the work themselves.
5. Attendees being assisted by a mentor should not seek the additional simultaneous help of another mentor. The group size is large and mentors need to be available to all. A mentor, however, may ask another mentor for advice or help when appropriate.
6. While we recognize that many objectives in bonsai may be achieved by more than one technique, the policy of the BSOP Mentorship Program is to teach specific approaches that have been successful in the hands of the mentors in the Pacific Northwest. It is unwise for attendees seeking assistance and guidance to be provided conflicting information. As such, mentors must be authorized by the Mentorship Committee and can be identified by their Mentor name badge.

Please note that the April 5 session has been cancelled in consideration of the growing coronavirus pandemic. No determination has been made at this time regarding sessions in May and beyond, but hopefully they will be able to resume. I hope to see you at that next session. All BSOP members should feel welcome, regardless of experience level from very beginners through folks with decades of bonsai practice. All will likely benefit! Early April is a time to complete repotting and to begin managing spring growth. May is an important time for spring growth management.

Howard Greisler

SUPER RAFFLE

Our current Super Raffle prize is a distinctive **Sub-Alpine Fir yamadori** collected by Randy Knight over two years ago. It has been styled by Lee Cheatle and is in a Vicki Camberlain pot.

We will be selling the \$5 tickets at the April, May and June meetings. The drawing will be held at the end of the program break on June 23rd. You need not be present to win. Tickets can be purchased at the Super Raffle Display Table in the raffle area.

2020 BSOP TEE SHIRTS!

DON'T MISS YOUR 2020 BSOP TEE SHIRT!

The Official 2020 BSOP Tee Shirt is Gildan 100% cotton, forest green with a design featuring the club logo tree in front of a stylized sunset in yellow-orange and a deeper orange. The back is plain. Men's sizes only, from small to 3XL. Priced at \$20 each.

Since the March 24th BSOP meeting has been cancelled, your last chance to get your Tee Shirt will be to order through the club website: Resources/Member Services. Let me know if you have trouble logging in.

If all else fails, you can send a note with your name and size, along with a check for \$20 payable to BSOP, c/o Jan Hettick, 6707 SW Pine Street, Portland, OR 97223.

The deadline to order is March 24th, to be delivered at the April 28 meeting. All orders and payments must be received no later than March 24, 2020. Email or call me with your questions.



Jan Hettick janhettick@comcast.net 503-504-7760

Bonsai Classes at the Gresham Japanese Garden

Learn and explore Japanese culture and bonsai from a Japanese teacher. Check out the once a month classes online at greshamjapanesegarden.com They are held at Tsuru Island, the Gresham Japanese Garden.

On March 19, there will be a presentation on the September 19, 2019 Bonsai Clubs International (BCI) Conference that was held in China. See more at bonsai-bci.com/

These classes are not connected to BSOP. This information is provided as a service to the bonsai community at large.

IMPORTANT AUCTION INFORMATION

Any BSOP member may sell at our Tuesday night auction.

Items for sale must arrive after 5:30 and BEFORE 6:30pm.

Bring item(s) to Auction Table and complete auction tag.

- Print legibly and press hard (to reach 4th page)
- Seller ID is your member ID (on back of your badge)
- Mark percentage to BSOP (20%, 50%, 100%)
- Add brief description of item
- Add minimum bid if appropriate (No minimum under \$10 please)
- Leave auction tag with sale item

If you bring something to sell,

- At end of evening, verify that it has sold
- If not, take it with you
- Items left after meeting become 100% donation to BSOP

Anyone may buy.

- Members use member ID number (back of ID badge)
- Guests get temporary number from Auction Manager

If you bid on something, verify if you won, then,

- Allow 30 minutes for bid posting after auction close
- Bring pink copy of auction tags to cashier with payment
- Goldenrod STAYS WITH ITEM AT ALL TIMES, acts as buyer's copy

BSOP Library Policies

BSOP maintains a large lending library of over 1,250 items that are available to all members. The library subscribes to the Bonsai magazines including Bonsai Focus, Bonsai & Stone Appreciation (BCI), International Bonsai and the Journal of the American Bonsai Society.

- Materials may be checked out at regular Tuesday night meetings to be returned at the next regular Tuesday night meeting.
- Materials may be renewed by the borrower for one additional month.
- All overdue materials must be returned before checking out new ones.
- Lost items must be replaced by the borrower or a fine paid equivalent to replacement cost.

BSOP February Monthly Meeting

Andrew Robson presented the February program on deciduous tree development. He emphasized the long term commitment for taking a tree from a seedling to a mature specimen. Practical information included early nebari development.



Reid Parham focused a live camera on tree detail, displaying in real time on a big screen. The audience could more easily see what Andrew was describing. Dennis Vojtilla provided excellent trees for demonstrating correct development.





Members displayed extraordinary examples of the bonsai arts.



Scott's BRANCH TIPS

BONSAI TECHNIQUE & PHILOSOPHY

Annual Repotting Update

It seems that each year since I started this column, over six years ago, that I have written about repotting in the Spring. Since repotting is such an essential part of our bonsai regimen, I thought that I would recap a few things and maybe pass on a few new tips. I just finished teaching several workshops specifically on repotting, with one more to go. Seeing a few common misconceptions, and some really good practices brought a few things to the forefront of my mind. I am sure that you are well into your repotting season by the time you read this. I started just last week – about March 1 on my trees.

The first point to consider that this is the only time that you get to work on the roots for at least two years. That is for deciduous. For conifers it might be 5 years. The work that you do now has to last the tree for that period of time. We have several times to correct branch structure by pruning, wiring, etc... during any one season. However, this is the only opportunity that we have work on the roots, correcting flaws, changing the soil or container and setting up the health and growth of the tree for the next several years. It's worth getting it right, to the best of our ability and knowledge.

First and foremost is the aftercare, so I am starting at the end, rather than the beginning. Make sure that you can keep any tree that was repotted this season from freezing, or at least the root portions. It's also best to be able to keep them out of the rain for several weeks until you see the tree starting to use up the moisture in the container. That means that it has recovered and is ready for the transition to our great Pacific Northwest spring weather. Rain.

For the first time in 30 years of bonsai, I built a heat bed to facilitate the recovery of plants after repotting. I mention the 30 years, because it is not in any way essential – I have made it fine this far. However, I can tackle the aging and declining root balls of some very old, collected trees with confidence. I started that process last year with great success and am now moving onto harder specimens That may be the subject of a future article. What makes my heat bed a little different is the fact that it is not in a greenhouse, but just out in the open on my patio. I love it already after just one week.

Next up is, have a plan. Do you have all of your soil components sifted and/or mixed and ready to go. Do you have the pots? More importantly, do you have the time? I am finding that just taking a pine from a six-inch pot up to an eight inch, with pruning, etc... is taking me about half an hour at cruising speed. I can't seem to do a medium size tree in less than two hours. And since most of my trees are larger, you can do the math.

If you run short on time, wrap the root ball in a wet towel and finish it later – within a day. Or you can heal it into a mound of something you might have, like old soil, bark dust, etc... Just make sure that it's moist. Once you have the tree popped out of the old container, work on the new one before you start on the root ball. The less time your tree is out in the air, the better.

If it is going back into the same container, take time now to rinse it out and let it drain and dry. If you know what pot you are going to use, put the drain screen in. The point really is to be looking ahead at what you are going to need to do to finish the repotting. Do you need to sift more top dressing? Do I need chopsticks of a different size? You get the idea.

My next point is to be gentle. Use a root hook only when necessary and with great care. Slow going with chopsticks or angled tweezers is much easier on the tree. The soil should be moist but not wet. Handle roots with care. You can decide later what to cut off, but if you mangle them, the choice is made for you. And remember that we don't want to bare root a conifer. It's chances of surviving, let alone thriving, go down really fast. Also remember that you don't necessarily have to cut roots to fit them into the pot. If you feel that you need to keep more roots for the health and vigor of a tree, you can simply fold them gently into the pot and address them in another few years when you have more root mass to utilize.

What soil you use is quite the conundrum and I am always seeking to improve what I have for each tree. There is no doubt of the effectiveness of Boon mix for bonsai, a 1:1:1 mix of Lava, Pumice, and Akadama screened to between 1/16 and 1/4 inch particle size. But it can be tweaked. And a lot. Take out the 1/8-1/4 for shohin, or the 1/16-1/8 for trees that like it a little drier, like mountain pines. But there's more. I have mentioned in the past that we can use up to 100% Akadama on deciduous trees. I am getting mostly favorable results with that – better than the standard mix.

But then there is Michael Hagedorn who favors just Pumice and Akadama, and our own Dennis Vojtilla that uses Lava and Akadama. They are leaving one component out and you can hardly argue their practice, looking at their trees. So, experiment on what works for you. I just had a workshop with the Eugene club, and their president, Tom Finsel (An outstanding bonsai artist and even better person to get to know) had a large container each of sifted Pumice and Akadama (A student of Michael's) with which he could easily mix up whatever proportions he likes for any particular tree and I really feel myself gravitating to that approach.

The last thought that I leave you with is what was hammered into me (albeit it gently) by Boon. Neatness counts. It carries through the whole process. It starts with the preparation of the pot. Make sure the screens are fastened neatly into a clean pot. My screen clips are always oriented perpendicular to the front of the pot to offer the lowest profile, so no one sees them hanging down in a show. The tie down wires likewise, running front to back instead of side to side, which uses less wire and is usually hidden by the pot's feet. I have to do all of this anyway, so it really is not any more time to make it tidy. Why would you tie a crooked tie, or leave your shoes half tied?

On a finishing note, make sure that you do not mound the soil too much. This is a consistent trait with beginners. Level off the soil where the roots start and taper it down to where you have a good 1/4 inch lip around the edge of the pot. This not only looks good, but makes it so that the water stays in the pot when you water.

Happy repotting. *Scott Elser*



Convallaria majuscula
(American lily-of-the-
valley) by Young Choe

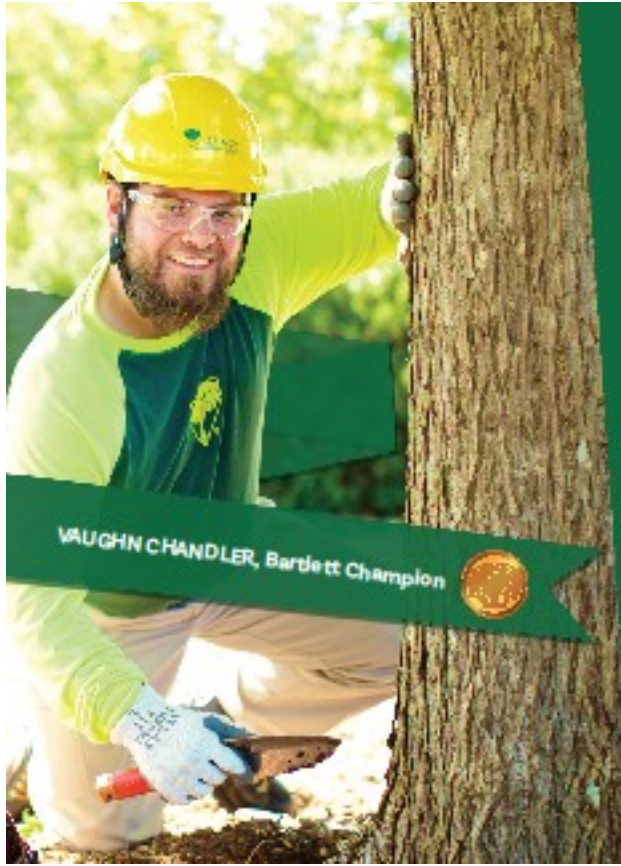
March Haiku

Little mouse be still
When will kitty spot her prey
Move and then she will

Ron Yasenchak

Painting by Ron
Yasenchak





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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!

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Contact information is on the BSOP website www.portlandbonsai.org under Resources/Member Services/Membership Directory