

PUGET SOUND



ASSOCIATION

FOUNDED 1973

## PSBA News Clippings



Puget Sound Bonsai Association

January-February 2012

P.O. Box 15437, Seattle, WA 98115-0437

Volume 39—Number 1

### The President's Desk: Pat Negron

Another year is here and we have several changes in the Puget Sound Bonsai Association: First I would like to welcome our new membership registrar, Sally Montejano and our new Treasurer, Rebecca Raelen. We also have a new officer-director position "New Member Chair" who will be Elsa Durham. This position will be responsible for all new members' workshops and the mentoring program that matches new members with experienced members, as well as other training and orientation programs for the new members. Kathy Blanchard and Jeannine Rakos have agreed to be our new directors. We greatly appreciate all of you for volunteering for these positions.

Please remember to read all the information in the News Clippings as it contains all future programs for the year 2012 as well as a very useful article "Now is the Time" that Ken Wassum has been so graciously writing, and which is especially informative for new members and all others who like to be reminded of what to do each month of the year, on their bonsai. Thanks, Ken, for these interesting articles. I hope all of you appreciate the job Morgia Belcher has been doing for many years as editor of the News Clippings and I think it only proper to read it, as it does contain important information. She is looking for articles for the News Clippings, so if you have any interesting articles please send to her or give to her at the meetings.

Pick up your calendar for the year 2012 and post in a place where you will remember to look at it. It will be posted on the website [www.psba.us](http://www.psba.us) also.

Note that our next activity is February 8–12 at the Flower & Garden Show in the Seattle Convention Center; I hope we will have lots of volunteers to help setup and docent. Please contact Don Guilliams and Jeannine Rakos if interested.

Please attend our next regular meeting February 27<sup>th</sup> at CUH. The Boon Study Group will give instructions and demonstrations on how to repot your bonsai as well as give us some helpful ideas on selecting nursery plants for bonsai.

I hope this will be an exciting year for all of you and for PSBA.

- Check us out at [www.psba.us](http://www.psba.us). Current and past newsletters are available.
- Print out the last page of this newsletter to remind yourself of upcoming events.
- Remember that PSBA will have bonsai on display in Tony Fajillo's landscape display at the 2012 Flower and Garden Show held February 8-12 at the Seattle Convention Center. If you are interested in being a docent for our trees please contact Jeannine Rakos at [jbrakos@hotmail.com](mailto:jbrakos@hotmail.com) or call her at 253-249-1270.
- Dues need to be paid—the PSBA dues for 2012 should be paid by sending a check for \$40 for 2 people in the same household or \$30 for one person. Send to: PSBA at PO Box 15437, Seattle, WA 98115-0437 or pay at the February 27th meeting at CUH.

## January 2012: Now is the Time...By Ken Wassum

Yes, it is that time of the year again – time to repot. The first tree I repot each year always feels a bit awkward. I guess it is because I go many months without repotting, and then all of a sudden it is time to do it. However, once I do one or two trees I find my rhythm. I really enjoy this time of the year. Every tree gets worked on multiple times during the year – but repotting is always the most intimate of all bonsai tasks.

I start by turning the pot on its side and cutting the tie down wires and the clips that hold the drainage screens in place. I position the tree on the edge of the large turn table so that the pot is on its side the tree is at 90 degrees. This way I am not hitting the tree against the turntable and damaging the foliage or branches.

After using my pot sickle to cut along three sides of the pot it is a simple matter to hold the pot firm and push the tree towards the uncut side and it comes right out of the pot. Laying the tree on its side again and holding it with one hand I use a repotting rake to gently remove soil. How much is removed depends on the type of tree, age of tree and stage of development of the tree. Using sharp root shears I then trim the bottom roots. The root pad should be flat on the bottom in order to sit secure in the pot. If you cut the root ball in a rounded or curved manner the tree will rock in the pot. I use a sturdy pair of bent-nose tweezers to gently remove soil from the top and the edges of the root ball and then trim the roots.

If I plan to put the tree into a new pot then I have it all ready with screen and tie-downs. If I am using the same pot I wash it out with the hose and pot brush to remove surface dirt. I never use soap to clean the pot and never anything other than a light cleaning with the pot brush. Over the years, bonsai pots begin developing a patina on the exterior. As my wife will attest to, I love to acquire old pots, and I am careful not to remove this wonderful patina. Once clean, I put in new screens and tie-downs.

After putting a layer of drainage (typically pumice one size larger than the soil size) and a little new soil I position the tree. This is where it can get a bit tricky if I am not paying attention. To get the tree at the correct height in the pot I find it very important to view the edge of the pot at eye level. I then wiggle the tree down into the soil mixture to get it at the right height and centered in the middle of the pot. After checking to make sure that the tree is also centered from the side of the pot I add a little more soil, secure the tie-down wires by twisting them together and then add soil so it is just below the edge of the pot. Then it is time to gently hit the pot on each side while holding the tree securely in place to help settle the soil and then tamp the soil mixture firm. After watering the tree thoroughly I protect it from hard freezes for the rest of the year.

I find it absolutely critical to keep a yearly log of which trees got repotted into which pots. It makes next year's work SO much easier. The Boon study group will be demonstrating repotting at the upcoming February 27th meeting so be sure to attend and bring your questions.

Have fun!

## New Member Winter Calendar by Elsa Durham

New Member Workshop Topic: Repotting

Lecture & Demonstration: February 27<sup>th</sup> Club Meeting

Repotting Workshop: March 11, 12:30 p.m. at Bonsai Northwest

NW Flower & Garden Show, February 8-12

**Repotting lecture at the Feb.27<sup>th</sup> meeting and repotting workshop on March 11<sup>th</sup>:** Two of the basic skills that everyone new to bonsai needs to learn are wiring and repotting. Traditionally PSBA has offered a new member a tree and a pot along with a new member workshop where the tree was repotted and wired for styling. Each of these procedures stresses the tree. To conform to good bonsai practice, we have decided to split that workshop into two parts---one in the spring for repotting and one in the fall to complete the design with wiring. This allows for time between the two procedures for the tree to stabilize and recover. Thus, each new member will be offered a tree and pot and a minimum of two workshops.

We began this “two workshop” program last fall. On October 9, 2010, we had a new member workshop to design and wire the trees. The new members who attended this workshop should try to attend the March 11, 2012 workshop to receive their pots and complete the process with repotting those trees. The new members who could not make that workshop should begin their process by attending this March repotting workshop and then complete it next fall when we do the wiring workshop.

The March repotting workshop is preceded by a lecture and demonstration on repotting at our club meeting on February 27, 2012 (there is no January meeting). This is a very important lecture for all new members to attend, whether or not you are attending this particular workshop. This is a practical “how to” lecture which is perfectly timed to introduce the March 11 workshop. It will take you step-by-step through the repotting process and address issues like preparing the pot and soil selection. At the Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> meeting, you will be shown what to do and how to do it; at the March 11<sup>th</sup> workshop, the new members will have the opportunity to apply this knowledge with the benefit of teachers to answer questions and guide you through the process.

Recognizing that it may take more than a one time to gain an understanding about either repotting or wiring, PSBA is also extending an invitation to new members (members for three years or less) to attend to observe any new member workshops. Even if you have already received, repotted and wired your tree, you are welcome to come and observe at new member workshops. You may bring a tree for consultation, but those attending for the first time will always have priority for completing the tasks at that workshop.

**Northwest Flower & Garden Show:** The other big event before Spring rolls around is the NW Flower & Garden show from Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> at the Washington State Convention Center. Yes, this is the big garden show where they move in full-blown display gardens and vendors that hawk everything you can imagine relating to the garden. PSBA will display bonsai in one of those gardens and needs docents at that display. This is a great opportunity for new members to give some volunteer time to the club and get into the show for free. The show is open from 9 am to 8 pm, except Sunday when it closes at 6 pm. Docent shifts last three hours, leaving you the rest of the day to see the show. The entry fee is \$20 per person, but I haven't paid in years because I see the show when I docent.

Being a docent is a great way to begin volunteering with the club and to meet other club members. Do not worry about people asking you questions about bonsai that you cannot answer. First of all, they won't. The two most commonly asked questions are: “How old is it?” and “What does it cost?” Answering the first question is simply a matter of giving them the information on the sign regarding years in training and possibly the age and the answer to the second question is that these trees are from member's private collections and are not for sale. You have now covered 98% of the public's questions.

Being a docent also gives you an opportunity to really study some good trees. You can ask yourself what you like and what you dislike about each tree. Would you choose a different pot for the tree? Would you change the design? How? Having the time to give a few bonsai a close, critical review is a great opportunity to learn and to begin to develop those critical questions to ask about your own collection or that tree you are thinking of purchasing. Those interested in becoming a docent for the NW Flower & Garden Show should contact Jeannine Rakos at jbrakos@hotmail.com or leave a phone message for her at 253-249-1270. New members with questions about any of this should contact me, Elsa Durham, at still.floating2@gmail.com.

## Winter Came—Hope the Bonsai Winter Over

Winter arrived with a vengeance in the last week. Hopefully, your bonsai were happily tucked away. At least the ones in the Gig Harbor yard were safely covered with a good blanket of snow. Spring will come and we'll see what the winter of 2012 wrought.



## Remember: The Pacific Rim Collection is Open This Winter

The bonsai at Weyerhaeuser's Pacific Rim Collection is open to the public: it is open from 10 am to 4 pm Tuesdays through Sundays but closed on Mondays. Check it out!

**PUGET SOUND BONSAI ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**MINUTES OF JANUARY 8, 2012 MEETING AT BONSAI NORTHWEST**

Officer and directors present: Pat Negron, Grant Rauzi, Joel Schwarz, Rebecca Raelen, Kathy Blanchard, Elsa Durham, Doug Bradley, Helen Wattlely-Ames (via proxy to Negron), Jeannine Rakos. Others present: Morgia Belcher.

The minutes of the October 2, 2011 meeting were approved as submitted.

Blanchard's final treasurer's report for 2011 showed that the club had \$20,659.67.31 in the bank on December 31, 2011. This includes repayment of the \$9,000 load made to the convention committee for the 2011 PNBCA convention. The report was accepted. Negron asked Rauzi to contact Shaun Liebfried to do an audit of the treasurer's books.

Under old business, Negron will check with Jared Randell on the progress in updating the club's Web site. Rakos said docents are still needed for the Feb. 8-12 Flower and Garden Show and asked the secretary to end out a club-wide e-mail. She also reported that Sakura Con will be held April 6-8 and docents will be needed for that event as well.

Under new business, Durham has scheduled another new member workshop at 12:30 p.m. on March 11<sup>th</sup> following the board meeting at Bonsai Northwest. It will be focused on repotting. Blanchard noted that there will be a conflict on Sunday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, with two events scheduled--a board meeting and maple viewing at the Japanese Garden. A motion to switch the board meeting to Saturday, October 13, 2012, was approved.

Negron reported that Don Guilliams has resigned from the board. The resignation and Durham's recent election to the newly recreated officer position of new member coordinator leave two director positions open along with the unfilled post of vice president. A number of names were proposed as candidates for the board. Negron will explore their potential interest and appoint two people to fill the unexpired terms of Guilliams and Durham. Negron showed a used turn table that Bonsai Northwest has for sale and the board approved a motion to purchase it for club events for \$98. Negron said she would contact Guilliams to see if he would chair the 2012 auction committee. If he declines, she said she would contact Ken Wassum.

Several suggestions were made about club programming. The board informally agreed to bring back The Doctor Is In from 6:30 to 7 p.m. prior to the start of general meeting where members can bring in trees for evaluation/advice from veteran members. It was also suggested to schedule critiques of members' tree rather than having an artist work on a tree. A typical program would consist of a critique of 10 trees from members who registered to have their tree evaluated. Negron will check with CUH about having plaques placed on benches honoring deceased members Wayne Brewer, Marsha Nakahara, John Wulff and Louise Czerniski. Rauzi reported that one of Brewer's neighbors contacted him saying that he had rescued a neglected juniper from Brewer's old apartment (with permission of Wayne's family) and wanted the club to take over care of the tree. The tree could be auctioned off or perhaps used as a demo tree by a guest artist. Schwarz volunteered to pick up the tree and care for it until a decision was made.

The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by  
Joel Schwarz  
Secretary

**Puget Sound Bonsai Association**

Puget Sound Bonsai Association  
P.O. Box 15437  
Seattle, Washington  
98115-0437

Phone: 253-851-9636  
psba.us

The PSBA News Clippings  
Is published nine times each year by the  
Puget Sound Bonsai Association: P.O.  
Box 15437, Seattle, WA 98115-0437.  
The newsletter is published in order to  
share general information about bonsai  
techniques, events, and other items of  
interest to members. . If you are not  
receiving e-mail copies, please contact  
Carol Sangster at csangster@chubb.com.

Editor: Morgia Belcher 253.851.9636 or  
morgia@centurytel.net  
Assistant Editor: position open  
Production Editor: Jana Loyd  
Mailing Labels: .Sally Montejano  
Questions about the publication should be  
directed to the editor. Permission to  
reprint articles is granted to other bonsai  
clubs for use in their publications, except  
where expressly prohibited or noted  
herein.



News Clippings  
P.O. Box 15437  
Seattle, WA 98115-0437

Monday, February 27 7 pm—10 pm	Repotting Demonstration and Selecting a Plant for Bonsai from a Garden Nursery by the Boon study group
Monday, March 26 7 pm—10 pm	Almost everything you wanted to know about Viewing Stones but were afraid to ask
April 23 7 pm—10 pm	Michael Hagedorn will be our guest artist, using a zelkova which he is refining.

