



## COURTYARD CELEBRATION

The Celebration for the completion of the Upper Courtyard and the reopening of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum took place on Thursday, May 8th. Storm clouds threatened the late afternoon event, which was scheduled to be held in the courtyard itself, so the decision was made to move the ceremony indoors to the auditorium.

U.S. Arboretum Director, **Thomas S. Elias**, first welcomed the distinguished guests: **Howard Vanzant** in honor of **Maria Rivero Vanzant**, **Janet E. Lanman**, **Joan Clark** in honor of **William Clark**, **Norma Merritt** in honor



John Naka with *Goshin* at Courtyard Celebration

Photo: Jackson Tanner

of **H. William Merritt**, **Hiromasa Oguchi** in honor of **Kenichi Oguchi**, **Susan Chinn** in honor of **Stanley Chinn** and **Tom Inglesby**. Mr. Vanzant, Mrs. Lanman, Mrs. Clark and Mrs. Merritt were celebrated for their contributions to the courtyard project, while Mr. Oguchi was honored for stone and calligraphy donations from his father (see story below on "Benefactors and Friends"), Mrs. Chinn for the donations of penjing from her husband and Tom Inglesby for his work on the

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## BENEFACTORS AND FRIENDS

In the early months of this year, the National Bonsai Foundation lost three wonderful and gracious benefactors of the Museum: **Mary E. Mrose**, a warm and sparkling friend to all who made her acquaintance, died on the first day of spring, March 21; **Kenichi Oguchi** of Japan, an artist and generous donor to the collections of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum, died on April 21; and **Marion Gyllenswan**, one of the founders of the National Bonsai Foundation, died on May 1.

These good and true friends of the Museum are remembered here by some of those who knew them well: **David Garvin**, **Mary Ann Orlando** and **Alan Mighell** remember Mary, **Tom Elias** writes of Mr. Oguchi, while **Janet Lanman**, with help from **Jerry Stowell** and **Phyllis Wishnick**, shares recollections of Marion.

### Mary E. Mrose

Born in 1910 in Massachusetts as one of eight children, Mary had three distinct careers. The first was that of teacher. A graduate of the State Normal School at Salem, she taught junior high school history, geography, civics, math and English, while earning an M.A. in Geography at Boston University and a B.S. in Education from the State Teachers College in Salem and also studying piano at the New England Conservatory of Music.

During the 1940s she worked at Harvard University on Volume II of the 7th edition of

*Dana's System of Mineralogy*. Then in the early fifties a colleague, Howard Evans of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, moved to Washington D.C. to work at the U.S. Geological Survey. Once there he also found a job for Mary. So in 1953 she moved, with her baby grand piano, to an apartment in Arlington, Virginia where she resided for the rest of her life.



Mary E. Mrose

of a very rare mineral from Mexico named for her, *Mrosite*.

After retirement from the Survey, she embarked on a third career: from 1983 until 1999 she was a full time guest worker at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). Here she compiled and edited mineral data for the Crystal Data Project and was active in the International Centre for Diffraction Data, serving on the Board of Directors and editing the *Powder Diffraction File*. Her interest in education combined with her exceptionally generous spirit were reflected

in her frequent contributions to the Ludo Frevel Crystallography Scholarship Program.

Throughout her life Mary's avocation was the identification of trees. She never met a tree she didn't like! Constantly on the lookout for trees that were new to her she identified all the trees on the grounds of NIST and was always checking for specimens while driving. If she spotted one, she would stop, often illegally, and in one way or another, including asking for help from willing, passing volunteers, obtain a sample for identification.

This dedication to trees led her to the U.S. National Arboretum in 1991 where she was a volunteer in the library, an area that afforded her many opportunities to apply her wide ranging background. At the Arboretum she financially supported the development of the State Grove of Trees and the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum, including the construction of the International Pavilion that is named in her honor.

A friend of many, one said: "You could meet Mary for the first time and she would know who you were, what you did, whether you were married and did you have children in five minutes and (then) leave you feeling that you were doing great and that you had just acquired a good friend. And you had."

Mary will be long remembered for her enthusiasm, her candor, her kindness and her joyful spirit.

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## President's Letter



Bonsai masters teach us to see things differently and if we gain that perspective it offers one of the most magical gifts of bonsai.

One of our greatest teachers, John Naka, turned 89 on August 16 of this year. As part of the birthday celebration his Nanpukai club held its annual exhibit where some of John's trees and those of his students were on display. For this occasion Ted Tsukiyama flew over to Los Angeles from Honolulu to interview John for a film that is being produced for the 5th World Bonsai Convention in 2005. It seemed like such a wonderful event and it made me think: how many of us—from all over the world—have learned to see things differently from this master?

This fall Ted will travel to Omiya, Japan to interview Saburo Kato for the same film. This is Saburo Kato the revered sensei who taught an entire generation of Japanese masters how to find the beauty

of nature in bonsai. How much we have learned from him as well. It will be a pleasure to see John Naka and Saburo Kato together in the same film.

During these summer days a number of visitors to the Museum have commented that the bonsai and penjing look particularly well groomed and artistically elegant. This is due to the talents of Curators Jack Sustic and Jim Hughes with the assistance of many volunteers. They too must have the vision of being able to see things with fresh eyes in order to face the challenge of styling a masterpiece bonsai or penjing from Japan or China that has been tended each day for perhaps over a hundred years before coming to the United States.

The youngest generation of masters is represented by Toyohiro Iitsuka, 30 years old, whose family owns a black pine bonsai nursery in Japan and who has been doing bonsai for as long as he can remember and has recently finished a 6-year apprenticeship with Saburo Kato. This August he worked at the Museum as part of a program funded by NBF, and I had the privilege of watching him style a collected juniper from scratch. What was most evident to me as I watched him work was his power of looking at this tree in a new way.

To see our natural world through a master's eyes: how fortunate we are to be the beneficiaries of this teaching!

*Felix*

## Back Issues of the *NBF Bulletin* Needed

The U.S. National Arboretum Library would like to have copies of the following ORIGINAL back issues of the *NBF Bulletin*. If you have one of these issues and you would like to donate it to the Library please send it to:

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*Thank you!*

Visit NBF's Website:  
[www.bonsai-nbf.org](http://www.bonsai-nbf.org)

## Curator's Corner

By Jack Sustic

For those who were lucky to be here in Washington in May for the Celebration completing the **Maria Vanzant Upper Courtyard** it was a great event and an opportunity for the Arboretum and the National Bonsai Foundation to express our gratitude to those who contributed to this wonderful project. Contributions come in many forms, some are financial and some involve just plain hard work.

I would like to extend here publicly my grateful appreciation to Assistant Curators, **Jim Hughes** and **Jackson Tanner**, and gardeners, **Danielle Roli** and **Christine Hilberg**, whose contributions fall into the latter category. Their efforts over a period of months resulted in many favorable comments made to me about the grounds and collections during the May celebration.

It is always quite a task preparing the Museum in the spring even during a “normal” year. But this was not one of those years. Since the Museum had been closed for construction for over a year, the excitement of preparing for this year’s celebration was extra special for us. Our work started long ago when, the former Museum gardener, **Sarah Strickler**, expertly removed all the plants from within three feet of the path in the Cryptomeria Walk and then moved these to the Arboretum’s lath house to be cared for until they could be replanted.

This spring we did that major replanting and then planted over 350 more new perennials and shrubs. In addition, pavilion walls were scraped and painted, courtyard benches were scrubbed and repairs were made throughout the Museum complex. All of this was done by Museum staff and came on top of the normal tasks of spring like repotting and grooming the trees during the intense and frenzied weeks of spring.

At times the “to do” mountain in front of us seemed insurmountable. But all work was



Photo: Shawn Theew

Curator Jack Sustic

accomplished and it was done with team spirit and cooperation. Now we look forward to new projects and plans in the Museum in the coming months but, when things seem to be overwhelming, it is comforting to know that these people are here and I am grateful to them all.

## Collection Stories: The Purloined Pomegranate

By Cheryl Manning

In 1960, California was building the Golden State Freeway. Thousands of homes needed to be removed before the ribbon of asphalt was laid. And all of that lovely landscaping surrounding these houses would end up in a landfill. But not if John Naka could help it.



Photo: John Naka

Purloined Pomegranate: 1972

John and one of his original Nanpukai members, **Ichio Koga**, went cruising the abandoned streets looking for potential bonsai material. At one old home, they saw four interesting pomegranates against two sides of the structure. Normally, you’d expect John to evaluate the rootage, movement, taper of the trunk, and branching when deciding which tree to dig. But not this time. John spit into the palm of his hand and slapped the spit with

two fingers to see if the spit traveled to the right or the left. Spit direction guided John to the tree he would take home with him.

Early the next morning, they returned to dig up their treasure. But before the deed was done, a black-and-white patrol car pulled up, and a patrolman and his sergeant exited the vehicle, walked up to John and Koga, and inquired what they were up to. John saw that these men were not mad, and he figured honesty was the best policy (even if he was caught in the act of stealing property), so he “fessed up.”

“Good morning, officer. We didn’t ask for permission. If we knew who to ask, we would have done so. We knew we were doing wrong, so we came early.”

The sergeant asked for their names, addresses, phone numbers, and what they intended to do with their loot. So John told him about bonsai—“This art is so fun. I love it so much I want to share it with others, so I teach.”

Imagine John’s surprise when the sergeant responded, “You’re an instructor? I’ve heard about bonsai. I love it. Are there some more pomegranates? I’d love one, too.” Then he added, “All this property belongs to the state. You’re not supposed to have anything from here, but I’m sure you’ve spent hard work to dig it out, so you may keep it.”

John, the generous (and grateful) gentleman he is, dug up a couple of small trees for the sergeant before heading home. As soon as he unloaded the tree, his wife Alice fell in

love with it—so John gave it to her. She nurtured it with daily care. For the first few years, the tree was allowed to recover from the ordeal of collection and then the training of this tree began in 1963. John stepped in to do the



Photo: Cheryl Manning

Purloined Pomegranate: 2003

heavy work, but always with Alice’s help and input. It was originally a sprout-style, so John cut everything but the one most interesting trunk.

For the next 27 years, John and Alice teamed up to develop a masterpiece. And when in 1990 it was time to donate more trees to join **Goshin** in Washington, D.C., this purloined pomegranate was a top choice.

## COURTYARD CELEBRATION

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“Bonsai: Test Your Knowledge” Exhibit (see story on “Museum Exhibits”).

Remarks were offered by **Felix B. Laughlin**, NBF President, Minister **Satoru Satoh** of the Embassy of Japan and **James Moseley**, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Agriculture. The Mayor of Washington, D.C., **Anthony Williams**, was also in attendance. Mr. Laughlin, pointing to a drawing of the Museum complex on a gift card that was given to each guest, guided the audience through all the different building components in the Museum, citing for each element what NBF’s contribution had been. As to this very impressive litany of gifts, Laughlin said: “what has been achieved here at the Museum since 1976 is truly remarkable. It is a tribute to many of you sitting here today that we have exceeded our wildest dreams.”

Deputy Secretary Moseley, while noting the \$270,000 that NBF contributed to this immediate project, also pointed out that over the course of the history of the Museum NBF has given more than \$5 million dollars for construction and other endeavors. This funding in combination with federal funds is cause for the celebration of “the friendship and partnership that makes this national treasure possible.” He also highlighted one of the most important aspects of the courtyard project in that it marks the beginning of making a major part of this treasure “readily available to people with disabilities (and) moves us closer to our goal of full accessibility.”

As the ceremony concluded the sun came out and the celebrants proceeded down the Cryptomeria Walk into the new **Maria Rivero Vanzant Upper Courtyard** for a festive reception in the light of a lovely early spring evening. It was a magical conclusion to this happy occasion.

Events continued the next day for some participants as it was the annual meeting of the NBF Board of Directors. The Board said farewell to **F. Allan Hills** of Colorado and greeted new members: **Mary Bloomer** of Arizona, **Cynthia Helms** of Washington D.C. and **Glenn Reusch** of Virginia.

At noon the Board and other invited guests celebrated the life of **Mary E. Mrose** and dedicated a tree, adjacent to the **Mary E. Mrose International Pavilion**, in honor of this delightful woman who gave so generously to the Museum. The haiku which adorned the cover of the program for the ceremony gives a sense of the occasion and the person remembered:

*In the shadow of the cherry blossom  
complete strangers  
there are none . . .*

Issa



Photo: USDA/ARS

Left to right: Felix B. Laughlin, Joan Clark, Thomas S. Elias



Photo: USDA/ARS

Howard Vanzant with his niece, Julie Vanzant Lama



Photo: USDA/ARS

Thomas S. Elias and Hiromasa Oguchi



Photo: USDA/ARS

Felix B. Laughlin, Janet E. Lanman and James Moseley, Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture



Photo: USDA/ARS

Thomas S. Elias, Norma Merritt and Felix B. Laughlin standing in the H. William Merritt Gate to the Kato Stroll Garden



Photo: USDA/ARS

Stanley Chinn’s son, Tony and his wife, Susan, with one of his trees

## BENEFACTORS AND FRIENDS

(Continued from page 1)

### Kenichi Oguchi

The world bonsai community lost one of its staunchest supporters on April 19th when Mr. Kenichi Oguchi of Okaya, Japan died at the age of 90. Mr. Oguchi was a young man of 18 when he first learned about bonsai from a friend of his father. He then spent over 70 years collecting and growing bonsai and became known for his outstanding collection of Shimpaku junipers, Ezo spruce and other conifers. Only 20 years old when he succeeded his father in the family enterprise of operating one of the largest department stores in Okaya, he became successful in the business. As the store prospered he grew his bonsai on the roof until he was able to purchase a home with a large garden suitable for his expanding collection of trees. This collection of bonsai is now one of the finest in Japan.

Oguchi also developed a great interest in suiseki and during his life assembled one of the largest and most excellent collections of suiseki in Japan. With over 500 catalogued stones he displayed the best of these in his traditional Japanese greeting room. His collection of bonsai and some of the stones are beautifully illustrated in his book, *Kenichi Oguchi Kakuryuan Bonsai Collection*, which was published in 1987.

In addition to these interests he also studied the art of calligraphy and became known throughout Japan for his fine brush works, which were signed under the artist name of Kakuho. In 1947 his work won an award at the Mainichi Calligraphy Exhibition.

Oguchi's Shimpaku juniper was one of the original 53 bonsai donated in 1976 to the U.S. National Arboretum in celebration of the Bicentennial of the United States. This tree served as the model for the logo of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum and the National Bonsai Foundation. A year after Mr. Oguchi attended the 1976 dedication of the

Japanese Bonsai collection in Washington D.C., **John Naka** led a delegation of 70 western bonsai enthusiasts on a trip to Japan that included a visit to the Oguchi home in Okaya. His gracious hospitality to that delegation was long remembered by participants.

In 2002, he donated three suiseki and three framed works of his calligraphy to the Museum. In combining the arts of bonsai, calligraphy and suiseki, Kenichi Oguchi became a master of the three most important elements in a tokonoma display. He also leaves behind a legacy that will long benefit people in both Japan and the United States.

### Marion Gyllenswan

On November 27, 1982 Marion Gyllenswan chaired the first meeting of the National Bonsai Foundation at the home of **A. Fuller and Muriel Leeds** in Southport Connecticut.



Marion Gyllenswan

Also present were **Chase Rosade** and **Emanuel Dannett**. The purpose of the meeting was to focus on the building of a North American pavilion to display bonsai by American artists and to complement the 1976 United States Bicentennial Japanese Pavilion at the U. S. National Arboretum. This idea of a place where American bonsai artists might give their trees had its genesis in 1972 when **Yuji Yoshimura** proposed "that the richest nation in the world should have a National Bonsai Collection—a place to which Ameri-

can bonsaiists could give or will their treasures knowing the trees would be cared for and viewed by visitors for years and decades to come." Marion Gyllenswan was a moving force in achieving that goal.

Widely known and appreciated, not only as a dedicated follower but also as a star student of Mr. Yoshimura, she was well suited to lead the fledgling organization. A familiar assistant to Yuji when he gave formal lectures at the New York Botanical Garden or as a helper in his classes at his nursery in Tarrytown, New York, she also lectured on her own, traveling throughout New York State, as well as Connecticut, Ohio, Florida and Michigan often as the featured presenter at symposia.

Founding bonsai organizations was a significant part of Marion's history in bonsai. Before the inception of NBF she was also a founding member of the Yama-Ki Bonsai Club in Stamford Connecticut and one of the incorporators of the American Bonsai Society. She further served that organization as treasurer and advertising manager.

In 1967, when it was still unusual for Americans to study bonsai in Japan, Marion, along with sixteen other bonsai enthusiasts, participated in a three week bonsai course with a tour of Japan. The focus of the trip was a week long seminar at **Kyuzo Murata's Kyuka-en Bonsai Garden** in Omiya. There the participants studied the principles of wiring, potting and grafting under Master Murata.

Marion not only maintained an extensive personal collection of excellent bonsai trees, but she also acquired a large library of material related to bonsai and Japanese gardening. Some of these publications will now be given to the Museum's library.

In 2003 the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum is truly a national treasure and this is a tribute to the visionary leadership of Marion Gyllenswan.

*Thank you Marion.*

## Viewing Stone Display to Honor Alyce Hirao

By Larry Ragle

In the spring **Harry Hirao**, bonsai and suiseki master and an honorary member of the Board of Directors of the National Bonsai Foundation, donated three large viewing stones to the National Collection in memory of his wife Alyce. However, this magnanimous donation created a slight problem: how could they be properly displayed?

The plans called for the stones to be on view in an outdoor area adja-

cent to the Special Exhibits wing of the Mary E. Mrose International Pavilion. Although two of the stones had hand carved walnut diaza (form fitted bases) the beauty of a wooden diaza would soon be lost if exposed to the elements. Therefore, all-weather diaza would have to be built for the three stones. The solution was to make them of *Bondo*, a durable but workable plastic. When mixed with a catalyst the material solidifies conforming to all of the curves of the bottom of the stone. In just a few minutes the hardened *Bondo* diaza can be carved and shaped like wood.



From Left: Joe James, Bob White, Harry Hirao, Bill Hutchinson & Larry Ragle

However, a second problem surfaced after Harry selected the stones. While fitting the *Bondo* diaza to a typical suiseki or a stone small enough to be handled by one person is not difficult, it was not so easy for Harry's stones. These stones were huge and would require two or three strong men using pulleys,

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Al Nelson prepares stone

## Museum Events

When the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum reopened at the beginning of this year two exhibits were in place. First, in the **Special Exhibits Wing** the **Winter Silhouettes** show opened on January 18. This always stunning display attracted hundreds of visitors and was featured in a long article on the Museum in *The Washington Post Weekend* magazine.



Photo: Jackson Tanner

*Winter Silhouettes Exhibit*

In the **Mary E. Mrose International Pavilion** an orientation exhibit designed for new visitors to the Museum was also installed in January. In addition to a wall size map that illustrates the main garden and building features of the Museum complex, there is also an interactive exhibit: **Bonsai: Test Your Knowledge!** This display is comprised of ten handsome exhibit boxes custom designed and hand crafted by Museum volunteer **Tom Inglesby**. Each box has a basic bonsai question on the cover and when the visitor lifts this up the answer is revealed.

Sample question: "The art of bonsai, or growing trees in containers, began in China or Japan? Answer: China. Known as penjing or scenery in a container, this art form was practiced in China over a thousand years ago. The Japanese imported the custom hundreds of years later."

Visitor response to the exhibit, has been immensely positive and it will continue at least through the end of 2003.

In May the long awaited and greatly heralded **Bonsai inSites** exhibit curated by ceramic artist and bonsaiist **Ron Lang** of Baltimore opened for a ten day show. Over 5,000 visitors viewed this extraordinary exhibit that combined traditional bonsai



Photo: Jackson Tanner

*Volunteer Tom Inglesby in the "Bonsai: Test Your Knowledge Exhibit!"*



Photo: Jackson Tanner

*Brett Thomas, Ceramic Artist & Bonsai inSites Exhibit Curator Ron Lang*

with unique contemporary pots designed by world-renowned ceramic artists. The exhibition was co-sponsored by the **National Bonsai Foundation, Friends of the National Arboretum, Potomac Bonsai Association** and **Baltimore Clayworks**. Copies of the exhibit catalogue are still available for purchase (please see enclosed publication sheet).

Other events of the spring season included a lecture by NBF member, **John Carlson** on **Suiseki: The Art of the Viewing Stone**, the **Ikebana International Flower Show** (April 18–27), the **Potomac Bonsai Association Exhibit and Sale** (May 2–4), the **Satsuki Azalea Bonsai Exhibit** (May 24–June 1) and the **Northern Virginia Bonsai Society Show** (June 14–22).

Upcoming exhibits for the rest of 2003 are the annual **Viewing Stone Exhibit** of the National Collection of Viewing Stones (August 9–24) with a lecture by **Martin Schmalenburg**, Director of Asian Studies at Blair Academy on August 24 (\$10.00/\$8.00 NBF and FONA—see below for registration information).

From September 13–21, the **Bowie Bonsai Society** will have a display in the Special Exhibits wing where the spectacular **Fall Foliage in Bonsai** will also run from November 1–9. A **Twilight Tour** of the Museum and the exhibit is available on Saturday November 8 from 5:00–6:00. (\$7.00/\$6.00 NBF and FONA. See below for registration information).

The **Winter Silhouettes Exhibit** for the upcoming season will have an earlier show date this year when it will open during the Holiday Season on December 27, 2003 and continue until January 4, 2004. In conjunction with this year's exhibit a special **Twilight Tour** of the exhibit and the Museum will be led by Curator Jack Sustic on Friday, January 2nd from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. (\$7.00/\$6.00 NBF and FONA. See below for registration information).

**To register for events send check and event information to:** U.S. National Arboretum/3501 New York Avenue N.E./Washington D.C. 20003/Attn: Event Registration, EVSU.

## Museum Notes

- On May 9th, after the NBF Board Meeting had concluded and after the Museum had closed for the day, six guests from afar paid an unexpected visit. **Takako Yamaki Tatsuzaki**, daughter of **Masaru Yamaki**, who donated the celebrated 375 year old Japanese white



Photo: Christopher Cochrane

*Jim Hughes, Jack Sustic & Takako Yamaki Tatsuzaki, with family & friends at the Yamaki Pine*

pine (*Pinus parviflora* 'Mijajima') that survived the Hiroshima atomic attack, came to see her father's tree. Accompanied by her husband, **Takashi Tatsuzaki**, son, **Jin Tatsuzaki**, daughter, **Amaki Tatsuzaki**, and friends, **Mr. and Mrs. Takehisa Iizuka**, the group was escorted down to the Museum by Assistant Curator **Jackson Tanner**, where Curator **Jack Sustic** and Assistant Curator **Jim Hughes**, took the group to the tree, in its place of honor at the entrance to the Japanese Collection. Later that evening NBF hosted their special guests at the annual NBF Board Dinner in downtown Washington.

- NBF Board Member, **Ted Tsukiyama**, was designated as a "Hawaii Living Treasure." Mr. Tsukiyama, a prominent mediation attorney in Hawaii, is also a member of the **Hawaii Bonsai Association, Bonsai Clubs International** and the **World Bonsai Friendship Federation**.

- Frederick Mies**, member of NBF and the Potomac Bonsai Association (Brookside) and a Museum volunteer, died on June 17th. An American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), originally collected in Maryland and trained by Dr. Mies, was selected by Curator Jack Sustic for accession to the North American Collection.



Photo: Jack Sustic

*Fagus grandifolia*

- The NBF Website, has been redesigned by **Andy Rutledge** and the NBF webmaster, **Craig Hunt**. The textual information on the site is being updated to reflect changes in the Museum.

# It Takes A Village of Volunteers...

By James Hughes

I used to volunteer on the weekends at the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum. My effort of a few hours each week seemed like a small contribution, but I was glad to be a part of the group of people that supported the Museum.

Now I no longer volunteer each weekend. As Assistant Curator for the Plant Collections, my schedule has changed to five days a week, and that new perspective gives me the opportunity to appreciate the invaluable contributions that volunteers make to our national museum. The combined effort of these volunteers is truly impressive. Without their support, the ability of the Museum to function as a national showcase for bonsai, penjing and the related arts would be greatly diminished.

These unsung heroes show up day after day to help water, weed, and fertilize the trees. They help repot in the spring, prune in the summer, and winterize in late fall. They sharpen the bonsai tools and keep them sterilized

and sanitary. They mix different soil mixes for different trees and monitor soil PH. They keep a vigilant watch for weeds in the pots and other weeds trying to establish a foothold around the display benches. This army of volunteers rakes leaves in the fall, builds bamboo fences, and repairs display tables and bonsai stands. They operate sanders, pound nails, and hang shade cloths. They scrub the moss off pots and the trunks of trees. They help rotate the trees twice a week so the light falls equally on all four sides. They sweep floors, set up chairs for lectures, and fold handouts. They give public demonstrations on how to create bonsai. They help set up auctions to raise money for the Museum. They lead tours for visitors and answer bonsai related questions from the public. They photographed newly donated trees for the Museum's records. They record the historical data maintained for each tree in the collection. They help maintain the

gardens that surround the Museum and act as additional eyes and ears for the Museum staff to help protect and secure the trees.

Some of the volunteers make their contributions away from the Museum. They do research on upgrades to the security system, keep an eye out for future additions to the collections, and encourage donor support from the national bonsai community. They speak to garden clubs and other organizations educating the public about bonsai and the national collections. They donate their personal trees to the collection so that we might all enjoy their creations. They even give financial support for the continued operation of the Museum.

In the past twenty-six years since the inception of the Museum, thousands of hours of volunteer time have been given to the Museum and thousands of dollars have been donated. Each contribution is one individual act. Added together, they ensure that the trees in the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum will continue to flourish so that visitors in the future will be able to look upon these incredible treasures and experience the same joy that we feel when we visit them today.

## Meet Volunteer Jack Cardon

Jack Cardon was always curious about bonsai but did nothing about it until after his retirement as a partner in the federal tax law firm of Lee, Toomey & Kent in Washington, D.C. Then his former law partner, Frederic Lee, a long time supporter of the U. S. National Arboretum and the person for whom the Lee Garden in the Azalea Collection is named, suggested that he become a volunteer guide on the grounds. As a guide, the highlight of his tours was always the Bonsai Museum.

Then he saw a bonsai for sale at a flower show and on the spur of the moment he paid an outrageous price for a little unstyled sprig of a juniper. After killing this plant he decided to take former Curator **Bob Drechsler's** course on bonsai for beginners and began reading books and magazines and then eventually joined the **Brookside Bonsai Society**.

In the mid 1980s he offered his volunteer hours exclusively to the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum but, as he phrases it: "Bonsai Bob wisely kept me at bay." Finally, as the Museum continued to expand, he tried once again by writing a letter of offer to the Curator and this time his services were accepted. Jack has now been a volunteer for 18 years at the Arboretum and 16 of those years have been at the Museum.

His specialty is doing "what Jack Sustic, the curator, tells me to do." But that is always acceptable to Jack Cardon because he enjoys doing what must be done, although he shies

away from being called a "jack of all trades" (pun not intended.)

He finds visits from John Naka to be always memorable but one incident in particular comes to mind: "I was asked to help John wire his blue atlas cedar, one of my favorite trees. While wiring the apex opposite John I heard that terrorizing sound of something cracking and I figured my days as a volunteer were over. To my relief John held up a piece of a branch that he had been working on, laughed in his comforting manner and proceeded to show me how to cover the hole by



Volunteer Jack Cardon

moving branches around. It was a great teaching experience and I was pleased when he presented me with one of his Naka pins before he left."

Jack shares his retirement with his lovely wife Edythe who is an impressionist painter. Together they have four children, five grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

## VIEWING STONE DISPLAY

(Continued from page 5)

ropes and hydraulic lifts to hold the stones while the new diaza were built. Nevertheless, with Harry as supervisor of the project and the volunteer efforts of **Bill Hutchinson, Joe**



Howie Kawahara inserts new daiza

**James, Al Nelson, Paul Vasina, Bob White, Howie Kawahara and Larry Ragle**, all members of **Ko Fu Bonsai Kai**, which Harry co-founded in 1976, the task was accomplished.

The stones will soon be on their way to the Museum where they will be displayed in their stable diaza by next spring (2004). After they are installed on the plinths that are being custom built, visitors will be encouraged to touch and rub these magnificent stones.

Many people from around the country have contributed to the **Alyce Hirao Memorial Fund** for this wonderful project. Ko Fu Kai is paying for the materials to construct the diaza and has voted to contribute \$1,000 to the fund, as has **California Aiseki Kai**, the viewing stone club that Harry also co-founded. Please join us in helping to complete this viewing stone display by sending your donation to NBF.

# World Bonsai Convention

*By Glenn Reusch and Chris Yeapanis*

Many people around the world are already getting excited by the prospect of attending the 5th World Bonsai Convention, May 28–31, 2005 in Washington D.C., to be held at the Washington Hilton. The National Bonsai Foundation is one of the five sponsors that have formed an historic alliance to bring the bonsai world one of its finest conventions ever. The other sponsors are: the U.S. National Arboretum, the Potomac Bonsai Association, the American Bonsai Society, and Bonsai Clubs International. The host for the convention is the North American Bonsai Federation (NABF), and through that organization, the World Bonsai Friendship Federation.

The WBFF goal of promoting friendship and peace through bonsai is the force behind this assembly of speakers, demonstrators, workshop leaders, vendors, and bonsai aficionados from around the world. The 5th WBC will feature many big name bonsai personalities, including **Mr. Hiroshi Takeyama** (Chairman of Nippon Bonsai Association), and other established and talented individuals with unique skills and bright bonsai futures. Mr. Takeyama leads the contingent of

five Japanese, while plans include three presenters from Latin America, two from Europe, two from China, fifteen from North America, and one each from the other four WBFF regions.

The 5th WBC schedule will include sessions on bonsai history, bonsai pots, viewing stones (suiseki and Chinese Scholar's rocks), bonsai display, and workshops on grass planting. Masterpiece exhibits of bonsai will delight all visitors. Other exhibits will include viewing stones, bonsai pots, and bonsai photography depicting bonsai from many countries. Vendors will have nearly an acre to display their trees, pots, stands, and accessories from across the globe. Workshops, with fine material will be available for those who are interested, while raffles and auctions will entice others. There will also be ample opportunity for social activities with several scheduled receptions and dinners where participants can meet old and new bonsai friends.

This is expected to be the largest bonsai convention ever held outside of Japan. If you have not yet done so, now is the time to make your plans to attend the 5th WBC, May 28–31, 2005 in Washington, D.C.

To support NBF, please mail your contribution with your name and address to:

**Cesar Portocarrero**  
**NBF Treasurer**  
**3501 New York Ave., N.E.**  
**Washington, D.C. 20002**

*An envelope is enclosed for your convenience.*

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