



## NBF Annual Board of Directors Meeting

The NBF Board of Directors met on Friday, April 30 in the Yuji Yoshimura Lecture and Demonstration Center at the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum.

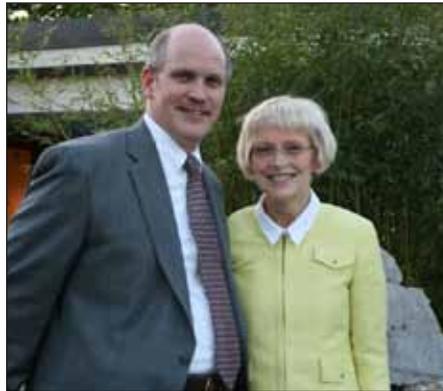
The first order of business was to nominate **Ted T. Tsukiyama** as an Honorary Director of NBF. Mr. Tsukiyama is a founder of, and legal advisor to, the World Bonsai Friendship Federation and he has served on the NBF Board for many years. A veteran of World War II he has done archival research on the role of Japanese-American Nisei soldiers during that conflict. He is an arbitration lawyer in Honolulu and has been named a "Living Treasure of Hawaii." The NBF Board lauded Ted for all his generous work in support of NBF and the Museum, and unanimously elected him as an Honorary Director.



*Ted Tsukiyama at the 5th World Bonsai Convention.*

NBF President, Felix B. Laughlin, gave a presentation on the Japanese Pavilion and the plans for the restoration and improvement of that building.

The projected cost of the renovation will be over \$2 million. In February he was accompanied by NBF Board members **Ted Tsukiyama** and **Jane Yamashiroya** on a trip to Japan where they explained the plans for the pavilion to the Nippon Bonsai Association (NBA) and **Daizo Iwasaki**. NBF is requesting NBA's help with this proj-



*NBF Board member, Fay Sharer, with Damian Ljungquist.*

ect since NBA was instrumental in arranging the original gift of bonsai and viewing stones from Japan that launched the Museum and provided the impetus for the building of the Japanese Pavilion. NBF also plans to honor Mr. Iwasaki's contributions to the bonsai world in the renovated Pavilion. NBA affirmed its continuing support of the Museum and the improvements to the Pavilion.

**Rhodeside & Harwell**, the landscape architects for the project, work-



*Harry Hirao with Jung Sustic.*

ing with Japanese-American garden designer, **Hoichi Kurisu**, have produced extensive drawings of the projected renovation. This will include innovative ways of displaying the trees, night lighting and improvements in shading and irrigation. After the Board had an opportunity to study the drawings, several members suggested possible changes that could improve the design.



*NBF President, Felix Laughlin, with Museum Volunteer, Akiko Sprague.*

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 Aarin Packard  
 Assistant Curator  
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## President's Letter



As the NBF Board of Directors confirmed at our Annual Meeting in May, NBF's top priority is the renovation of the 35-year-old

Japanese Pavilion. With the invaluable help of **Rhodeside & Harwell**, **Hoichi Kurisu** and other consultants, we have identified the major issues and commissioned conceptual drawings of the new Pavilion.

This project involves much more than just giving the Japanese Pavilion a face lift. Not only will NBF renovate and improve the existing walls of the Pavilion and install natural stone pavings throughout the Pavilion, but also the plans call for new railings in front of the bonsai, a new security system, a new adjustable shade structure, a new irrigation system, and a much-improved display arrangement.

From the perspective of visitors to the Museum, the new display arrangement should be a dramatic improvement. Visitors will first

encounter a formal display setting, then walk into a semi-formal display area, and finally exit through a naturalistic informal display gallery. The new arrangement will allow the visitor to concentrate his or her attention on each of the bonsai as an individual work of art.

To honor the contributions that **Daizo Iwasaki** has made to NBF and to the world of bonsai, a special area within the Pavilion will be named the "**Daizo Iwasaki Walk**."

The estimated cost of this project is over \$2 million. In the next few months, NBF's fundraising campaign will shift from the "Quiet Phase" to a full-blown public campaign. I hope we will have your support.

We extend our deepest gratitude to **Ted Tsukiyama** for his many years of dedicated service to NBF and the worldwide bonsai community, and congratulate him on becoming an Honorary Director.

We also congratulate **Bill Valavanis** on the tremendous success of his 2nd *U.S. Bonsai Exhibition*.

### Annual Board Meeting—

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Following this there was a discussion of fundraising for the project. A small steering committee, led by Felix Laughlin, is directing the first stage of the campaign, which is now in the "Quiet Phase". This phase will investigate the fundraising potential for the project, but it is clear that we will need at least 60% of the total amount in hand before a public campaign is launched.

The Board acknowledged that this is a daunting task yet something that NBF must do because the Pavilion is

in grave need of improvement and stabilization. All funds for the project will need to come from private sources since the government is unable to contribute any financial assistance to the effort.

At the conclusion of the meeting, an NBF board member pledged a significant sum if this amount could be matched. The extreme generosity of this donation will certainly invigorate the fundraising effort as the campaign moves forward. We will have more news on this exciting contribution

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## Annual Board Meeting—

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and the developments in the fundraising campaign in a future *Bulletin*.

The other important item on the agenda was the proposal from Weyerhaeuser to donate its Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection to the Museum as a Western collection. **Ernesta Ballard**, who has close ties to the Museum because of the association between NBF and her late parents, Frederic and Ernesta Ballard, is the Senior Vice-President for Corporate Affairs at Weyerhaeuser. Ms. Ballard attended the meeting and explained Weyerhaeuser's offer.

The proposal is that the entire Pacific Rim Collection, including the rent-free use of the display buildings, would convey to the Museum and the government without cost other than annual maintenance expenses such as staff salaries. However, these costs are not insignificant and could require an endowment of over one million dollars. **Ramon Jordan**, Interim Director of the Arboretum, said that while the concept is appealing he does not feel that the government would be able at



*NBF Vice President, Marybel Balendonck, right, with Kiyoko and Diana Nikaido, sister-in-law and niece of Harry Hiraio.*

this time to accept the offer. Nevertheless, the Weyerhaeuser proposal remains open-ended, giving NBF and the government some time to explore options.

After Board discussion, with members speaking both in favor of and against the proposal, it was decided that the first priority of NBF and the Board must be to raise funds for the Japanese Pavilion and other Museum

projects that have been pending for some time. Therefore, while this offer is most attractive, any decision on pursuing the viability of acquiring the Pacific Rim Collection was deferred. Ms. Ballard graciously pledged to assist NBF in raising the funds needed to renovate the Japanese Pavilion.

The Board meeting day concluded with the traditional reception in the Courtyard.

## Third Annual Bonsai Festival

Beautiful sunny warm weather and the allure of celebrating spring on a smaller scale enticed thousands of visitors to come to the U.S. National Arboretum for the 2010 **Potomac Bonsai Festival** on the weekend of April 30–May 2. For the third year in a row, the U.S. National Arboretum, the Potomac Bonsai Association (PBA) and the National Bonsai Foundation have co-sponsored this unique event that brings together eager bonsai novices, skilled bonsai hobbyists and people of all ages who rejoice in the beauty of little trees.

**Steven Tolley** of Great Britain, noted for his excellence in styling technique and extraordinary teaching skills, was the featured artist for the

weekend. He was also the judge on Friday for the first New Talent Competition held at the Arboretum. The winner of that contest, **Thomas Kodiak**, received a berth at the 2011 **Joshua Roth Talent Competition** sponsored by the American Bonsai Society.

In addition to the demonstrations, there were two PBA-sponsored events, the annual show of members' trees and stones displayed in the Administration Building and the Second Juried Show of regional bonsai in the Special Exhibits Wing of the Mary E. Mrose



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*Steve Tolley in a festival workshop.*

## Museum Notes

- *Sensei Edward Nakanishi* of Hawaii died peacefully on July 21st at his home in Pearl City. Claiming that he was “a student forever”, Mr. Nakanishi studied under many masters, including Saburo Kato, Toshinori and Tohru Suzuki, Susumu Nakamura, Yasuo Mitsuya and Hiroshi Takeyama among



Edward Nakanishi with his tree in 2005.



Nakanishi tree in 2010.

others. He was a mentor for younger bonsai students and was widely regarded as the foremost bonsai artist in Hawaii.

In 1993 Ed donated his Christmas berry (*Schinus terebinthifolius*) to the Museum. It is now on display in the Kaneshiro Tropical Conservatory of the North American Collection.

- *Becoming A Bonsai*, the acclaimed exhibit of last year, has returned for the Summer of 2010. Designed by Assistant Curator, **Aarin Packard**, it will be on display until mid-September. If you can't visit the Museum to see it in person it is available for viewing on the NBF website at: <http://www.bonsai-nbf.org/site/exhibits.html>
- Five Shohin donated by the Japan Shohin Bonsai Association, which have been in quarantine at *Brussel's Bonsai Nursery*, arrived at the Museum in February. Three of the trees are now on display in the Japanese Pavilion and are pictured on the right.
- On August 6th, the 65th anniversary of Hiroshima, *Voice of America* broadcast a feature on the Yamaki Pine and the Museum. **Jack Sustic**, Museum Curator, and **Johann Klodzen**, NBF Executive Director, were interviewed for the

segment. There is a link to the VOA video on the NBF website homepage <http://www.bonsai-nbf.org/site/index.html>

- *Tokyopop Tour 2010* visited the Museum on August 1st to film for their show, “America's Greatest Otaku”. *Otaku* is the Japanese word for “Geek” or “Fan” of Japanese culture. Assistant Curator **Aarin Packard** was interviewed for the report that will be broadcast sometime between November 2010 and January 2011.



*Gardenia jasminoides*.



*Osteomeles boninensis*.



*Ulmus chinensis*.

# BECOMING A BONSAI

An exhibit that answers “How do they do that?”

JUNE 26 - SEPTEMBER 12

10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

→

Special Exhibits Wing ~ National Bonsai & Penjing Museum

Photo: Joseph Mullian

Photos: Joseph Mullian

## Bonsai Festival—

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International Pavilion. For newcomers to bonsai, there were two workshops, one on tropical bonsai and another on junipers. For more seasoned bonsai practitioners, an intermediate workshop on collected yews was taught by Mr. Tolley, and **Chuck Croft**, PBA President, conducted a forest planting demonstration.

To add more Asian spice to the Festival, Museum Volunteer and renowned Ikebana artist **Sachiko Furlan** provided visitors with an orientation to this ancient art of flower arranging. Finally a huge tent of vendors gave all festival comers a chance to stock up on bonsai and related goods.

The 4th Bonsai Festival is scheduled for May 6–8, 2011.



*Sachiko Furlan demonstrating ikebana composition.*



*Jerry Stowell working at the International Scholarly Symposium.*

Jerald P. Stowell, a founding member of the National Bonsai Foundation and a director of this organization from 1981 until 2008, died in April of this year.

A native of Kalamazoo, MI, he moved to New York City after graduating from college in 1954. In New York he was a frequent visitor at the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens (BBG). Here he spent special time studying the bonsai trees, which led him to enroll in a program of courses offered by the Garden on the art of bonsai. In 1959 he had the opportunity to study

## Jerald P. Stowell NBF Board Director (1927–2010)

at BBG under Yuji Yoshimura. In 1968 he enriched his knowledge of the art by traveling to Japan with a group of other Americans to study under Kyuzo Murata.

Mr. Stowell was the charter President of the Bonsai Society of Greater New York and the principal organizer and first President of the American Bonsai Society. In 1997 he received the Distinguished Achievement Award given by that organization.

The author of several bonsai books, including *The Beginner's Guide to American Bonsai* (1978) and *A Small World to Hold in your Hand* (2004), he also contributed articles to many bonsai publications. In 2002, as part of the *International Scholarly Symposium on Bonsai and Viewing*



*Jerry Stowell, center, in Japan.*

*Stones* held at the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum, he re-created a pre-bonsai tray landscape from a depiction on a 14th century Japanese scroll.

A recipient of a Master's degree in Public Health from Yale University, he worked as an Occupational Therapist, incorporating art and horticulture into his therapeutic practice. Mr. Stowell designed and maintained a lovely Japanese garden, which included a display of his bonsai collection, at his home in the Delaware township of New Jersey. There he and his partner, Warren P. Cooper, welcomed many visitors from around the world.

## Second National Bonsai Exhibition

By Jack Sustic

The 2nd U.S. National Bonsai Exhibition was held in Rochester, N.Y. on June 12 and 13. This bi-annual exhibition is organized and directed by **William N. Valavanis**, a long-time supporter of the Museum and a member of the NBF Board of Directors. The National Bonsai Foundation is one of the supporting organizations for this event.



*Rhododendron indicum 'Gyoten'.*

Earlier this year Bill asked if the Museum would consider displaying a tree from one of its collections in the exhibit. After discussing this with Arboretum staff, including **Ramon Jordan**, the Interim Director, it was agreed that this would be a wonderful opportunity to show a Museum tree outside of Washington D.C.

The tree selected for this was the Kaneshiro Banyan or *Ficus microcarpa* 'Kaneshiro' that was donated to the North American Collection by **Haruo "Papa" Kaneshiro**. My reasoning in choosing this tree is that I was sure



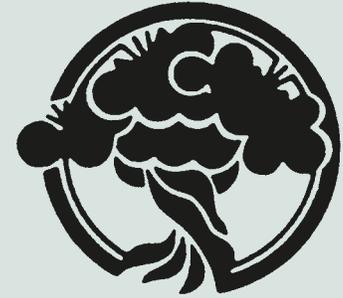
*Ficus microcarpa 'Kaneshiro'.*

Photo: Joseph Mullan

Hawaii would not be well represented in the exhibition, if it was represented at all. At the last moment I also loaded up one of our satsuki azaleas, *Rhododendron indicum* 'Gyoten', donated by **Shogo Watanabe** of Japan. It was in full flower and looked so beautiful that I couldn't resist taking it, and I was glad that I did because Bill liked it so much that it was placed on the first table in the exhibition hall.

The show was excellent. There were over 225 bonsai on display and 27 states were represented. In addition to trees from personal collections there were trees from many public gardens besides the Arboretum, including *Brooklyn Botanic Garden*, *Montreal Botanic Garden*, the *Pacific Rim Collection*, *Chicago Botanic Garden*, the *Arnold Arboretum* and the *North Carolina Arboretum*. **Kunio Kobayashi** (Japan), **Farrand Bloch** (Holland) and **David Easterbrook** (Canada) were the judges so there was an international component as well. Later this year an *Exhibition Commemorative Album* will be published so that everyone who couldn't be there will be able personally to judge the display.

The 3rd U.S. National Bonsai Exhibition will be held on June 9 and 10, 2012. Mark your calendars now!



Please renew your membership for 2010 so that you will continue to receive future issues of the NBF Bulletin. An envelope is enclosed for your convenience. You can send either a check or credit card information (name, number, expiration date, and email address).

### Categories of Support:

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