



Gresham Japanese Garden



Tsuru Island



Letting People Know



For several months we have been collaborating to get a feel for what might be appropriate for the things we would like the public to do differently and what kind of behavior would be appreciated by visitors and our volunteers at the garden. As a group we think there has not been a clear understanding of the expectations of the garden. In partnership with Parks and Recreation, we have produced a series of signs that will assist with some of these issues at the garden. All of these signs will be used at the entrance of the garden or around the "spur trail" near the entrance.

There is a major issue about dogs being allowed to relieve themselves on the trees and shrubs and some aggressiveness to other dogs that are walked in the garden. It is understood that a large number of those visiting the garden have their best friend with them and this creates a problem for them if we were to say "No Dogs". To create a balance we hope to control the "relief" issue by having a "relief"

area, to be used before entering. With yet another sign we will insist on a "short" leash so that the owner has control of the dog for the sake of other dogs and staying on the paths.

We hope to create a habit of parking strollers and bikes near the entrance of the garden instead of them being taken onto the paths.

This may not be the whole answer but if there is a small measure of success, it may lead to further improvement.



Friends of Tsuru Island has SHIRTS available for your purchase!

These black with red printing shirts produced by CY Graphics are Hanes' BEEFY-T made of 100 % pre-shrunk cotton. Small, medium, large and extra-large available.

ON SALE NOW \$19.50 each

All sales benefit the maintenance of Tsuru Island

Order yours on-line by sending us an email at

Gresham.Japanese.Garden@gmail.com

VISA payment available

BEHIND THE SCENES

Each month's article in this section has focused on a person that most of the public and our volunteers would not come in contact with. The emphasis this month involves three people of Moxon Hardwoods. We often take things for granted such as wood. This is realized especially when you visit the "World Forestry Center". Even more information can be gathered from companies that import, export and supply customers with products from around the world. Moxon deals mostly with hardwoods, but also has available supplies of domestic soft woods too. The company is operated by Phil and Donna Nolan and their son, Joe. they are located in Portland on NE Killingsworth near 205. Originally from Australia, Phil and Donna met while playing basketball in that country and eventually made a life together. Phil became associated with the Moxon operation in Australia. His career was destined to continue in the world of timber and wood. Their knowledge of wood products, uses, reactions to machining and so on is way over the top.

Preparing for building THE BRIDGE, and researching the Purple Heart wood, brought me

to Moxon. I showed up just asking lots of questions and received information without any intention of buying at that point. There were hurdles to get over including how to produce the components for construction. Several months later I stopped in again with numbers and amounts and inquired about the inventory of Purple Heart. I continued with questions about dust, glue, cutting tools, and possible delivery. By the third visit, Phil and Joe met me with questions of their own.



When the project was ready to get off the ground, money in hand, Moxon was so accommodating and was such a pleasure to do business with. They went above and beyond with no charge delivery; not once but twice to a new location. They provided information, storage of materials until we were able to assemble it, and visits to the job site for discussions.

I will continue to stay in touch and use their services. They are just "down to EARTH" folks and full of knowledge.

This is "**Behind the Scenes**". I intend to do this focus each month telling about a person or organizations that work with "Friends of Tsuru Island" to make the garden, its programs and the information possible. Most projects have individuals that work behind the scenes providing a service, a product or volunteer time to make all that is accomplished possible and we want our readers to know who they are. Not only do I want to tell you who they are but also how I might have become acquainted with them and how they have helped build, grow and offer.

No one person can do what we do, it takes a network and we hope you enjoy seeing and understanding what it takes "Behind the Scenes" to make it happen.





Lawn Care

As part of the last newsletter (March 2016) I discussed some of the things to know and consider about lawns. I have gotten several

comments that people had no idea about what to do with the lawn before reading that article. Most now have had a clear understanding why one must have a professional do the lawn installation.

I mentioned maintaining a lawn and keeping it up to the standard that is established. Whatever that standard is; dictates the amount of knowledge, time and money that one wants to invest into the lawn.

The lawn maintenance...

The maintenance of the lawn has much more to do with the big picture than just mowing and cleaning up along the edges. It can start with the understanding about the grass plant and how it will react to certain situations and the stresses. "Two steps forward and one step back" is what is constantly being dealt with when it comes to lawns. With a trained eye one can look at the lawn and see what needs to happen or what did not happen.

- When mowing never take away more than what you are leaving. Take a look at the height of the grass plants and raise the mower so that too much is not taken off. In two or three days go back and adjust the mower and mow again. If the lawn is taken down too short, the grass looks pale and yellow. This is an indication that the sun did not get to the base of the grass plants because it got too long.
- When fertilizing ***a little bit more often is better than a whole bunch at once.*** Do not wait too long between applications or you will lose your overlap time. I am not referring to the wheel tracks of the spreader if you use that type, but rather the frequency that you apply the fertilizer. Fertilizer like other pesticides should be used as the label recommends. Please realize that more is NOT better. When buying fertilizer remember that just like the seed, you get what you pay for. Buy a name brand such as Scotts, Lilly Miller etc. and read and understand that each of the elements will provide an outcome different from the others. Look at the contents and how much (filler) is in the bag, along with the percentage of the main three chemicals (N, P, K,) Check with the distributor to see which element applies to your needs.. I suggest NEVER using a "weed and feed" product. Not only are the contents bad for the

stream systems but also will stress the grass plants. It will not only kill the intended weeds but will push the grass to grow quickly, which puts a stress on the plant, unlike the slow release approach.

- The most important time to fertilize is in the middle to late fall. A winter blend is best to feed the root system of the grass plants and get them ready for the spring push. There are many advertisements in the spring for lawn fertilizer application. An application will increase the growth of the lawn plants along with the rains. The lawn grows quickly and is wonderfully green and causes the homeowner to mow more frequently. However, this application is not necessary. The fast response of the grass plants tends to be a stressor. The lawn will grow and green up naturally, just not as fast.
- Granular (slow release) fertilizer is the best value and will last much longer with slower effects on the grass than liquid products.
- Always remove your shoes after fertilizing or walking in the grass when entering the house, **YOU WILL TRACK THE FERTILIZER IN.**
- Purchase a product that has about 3% of iron in the content of the mix.
- There are products that have higher iron content that can be used for other purposes such as moss control, etc.
- Be aware that some iron products can leave a rust stain on concrete and cement when mixed with water. Be sure to ask which product causes this damage. When cleaning fertilizer off sidewalks or driveway use a broom or blower. There are products that will remove the rust off hard surfaces if that does occur.
- Most people tend to overwater the lawn. Actually too much water is a bad thing, not only for the grass but for the water bill. Which in turn increases the need for more nitrogen to the soil
- The lawn under a tree will sometimes look different. The grass plants are going to need food, water and consistency to do well. The tree and the lawn are competing for the water, food and sometimes the sunshine. When you water and feed the lawn you are also watering and feeding the tree. I can tell you that the tree is going to win every time. If the tree blocks the sun from the grass below it, the grass will become



thin, infiltrated with moss and in general stressed. Many times the area under the tree will be very dry. This is because the rains do not reach the ground and/or the roots are taking up the moisture. Tree debris cannot be left to sit for very long, especially on a new lawn that is just getting established. Killing the moss in a shaded area is a constant. The combination of less sun, more shade, acidity and location, all play a part to the condition. Conditions need to change to allow the right amount of sun for the right amount of time. Sometimes an application of Lime may help.

- The tools used to cut and trim the lawn are very important. All mowers have some kind of cutting system engineered into the machine. Most blades are made of steel and over time will get dull from constant cutting and must be re-sharpened, just like a kitchen knife. In a day or so after mowing the lawn may have this little tan cast to it that is caused by the ends of the grass blades turning brown. You may think the lawn is in need of more fertilizer but check the blade first to save on time and expense. To check if the blade is sharp, look at a blade of grass. If it has a clean cut, the blade is good. If it looks like the grass blades are shredded it is time to sharpen the mower blades. Sticks and stones will dull and damage the blade.
- One of the most dangerous things is a cracked mower blade. It can come apart at any time and cause serious damage and/or injury. It is standard practice in the lawn care industry to clean/sharpen and replace blades every day. As a home owner, one needs to remember that the sharper the blade the better the cut. If you hit something, check it out. Keep a file handy to remove dings. The balance of the blade is also critical. If the blade is out of balance it will cause wear and tear on the engine shaft.

- Cleanliness of the mower is a big thing. If the mower is being used by several people, clover seeds, moss spores, weed seeds, fungus and other items can be transferred to the homeowner's lawn.
- There is a fungus to be aware of called "red thread". This fungus is caused by the clippings sitting in a pile in the yard. Once the fungus grows in the old grass clippings it can be tracked back into any area of the lawn, yard, or house. It is characterized by a pink to red appearance on the ends of the blade which looks shredded. To remove "red thread" from the lawn add a small amount of nitrogen fertilizer to the areas affected. In about two weeks the lawn should be back to normal. Washing the mower is especially important if red thread is noticed. It will spread from the mower blades to other areas of the yard.
- It is important to check the amount of water being used on lawns and shrubs. Use a screw driver or bulb planting tool to dig down and see what the moisture is below the surface. Mow lower in the spring and fall but raise the mower in the summer to help shade the stems and roots of the grass. A half inch will make all of the difference.
- Unstressed lawn grass is very resilient. Animal urine spots can be fixed with seed mixes or sod. Ice damage will recover in the spring. Spots where leaves were left will fill in after being raked come spring except in severe situations.
- Environmental issues need to be considered. Although with consistency and the purchase of environmentally sound products, improvements can be made to ground water and watershed areas. Visit the City of Gresham website at greshamoregon.gov/lawncare to get more information.

New To The Shoebox



We call it the "shoebox". We do not know where the name came from. In the meantime we have a new name and a new sign for the building. The sign will be the key for individuals to find the building when they need to visit for a project, to sign in as a volunteer or go to a workshops.

If you visit that area of the park you will also notice the newest information station that is directly in-front the "Resource Building" It will provide a place to show the schedules for workshops, meetings and scheduled volunteer days for "the garden" and "the center".

All Those Things To Do

- A new chain-link fabric for the fencing around the shoebox. (adopted by Gresham Little League)
- Replacing the lawn for the emergency path in-front of the shoebox. (May)
 - The seed and soil provided
 - Needed are prep labor and a commitment to keep watch over the lawn during the HOT months. Also to provide nutrients so that it will flourish.
- Install an additional irrigation main line from the horseshoe area leading up to the Resource Center. (planning in progress for more than a year)
 - The Dingo with a trencher is available.
 - The pipe and glue for the installation are available.
 - A team leader is needed. The knowledge needed is available to get the project started and going.
- Winter green has been installed in the general vicinity of the "Turtle" on Tsuru Island. There are 5 left.
 - Many more are needed for this area and will be available to installed so that the area is filled in.
- A generous donation to purchase materials to produce "Tsuru Island" banners to put on light poles between Main/Powell and Tsuru Island.
 - Materials have been purchased and sown and are currently at the screen printers.
 - Adoption of this project would require coordinating the installation of the banners and installation of brackets that are provided by Parks and Recreation. This is a one day project.
- Plant material identification for Tsuru Island. (Adopted by Bill Peterson)

NEXT MONTH: Building the "Azumya"

Questions / comments to:

gresham.japanese.garden@gmail.com



STUDENT WORK DAYS

May 20 - 11am to 3pm

A lunch will be provided for the students and staff on these dates to provide as much volunteer time as possible

Would you like to contribute to the KAZ Kids Lunch program?

Donations can be designated to "Kaz Kids" and given to Jim, Tomiko, Ron or Wendy

or mailed to: GESCA

PO Box 1652

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