

Tsuru 鶴 Soars

Friends of the Gresham Japanese Garden Newsletter



A Time to Have Fun

by Mary Dickson

While Americans spend December frantically getting ready for Christmas, the focus is different in Japan. Since only about one percent of Japanese are Christians, the religious aspect of Christmas is pretty foreign. However, Japan has several interesting December customs.

December 24 is the most romantic holiday in Japan, when couples go on dates and exchange presents, sort of the Japanese equivalent of Valentine's Day.

In 1974, Kentucky Fried Chicken introduced the idea of families getting together and sharing a chicken dinner.



You have to make your reservation at KFC six weeks before Christmas to get the "party barrel." Here's Colonel Sanders

himself, reminding you to make your reservations to pick up your dinner.



Another Japanese tradition is to have a special Christmas cake, beautifully decorated.

One of the most beautiful December traditions through-



PHOTOGRAPHER'S VIEW

*Fall colors and chill
Surrounding the garden bridge
Winter soon to come*



out Japan is called "White Illumination," where colorful lights fill public spaces.

Of course, much of December is spent getting ready for the most important holiday in Japan, New Year's.

Aesthetic Pruning Training Program Schedule

GJG is thrilled to announce its Pruning Program taught by professional aesthetic pruners. The pruning courses are designed for gardeners and landscape professionals interested in pruning for the health of a plant and for the aesthetics of the landscape, while advancing their pruning and plant knowledge and skills. Each course focuses on different aspects of pruning in regards to various plant materials.

The winter pruning training program includes three courses taught on Zoom with one-hour recaps held at Tsuru Island. After the courses and recaps, there will be an all-day hands-on workshop for 12 people who have completed the courses.

The all-day workshop is a hands-on training with Francheska Snyder and her assistant. You must take all three winter pruning courses to participate in the all-day workshop. The course recaps are not mandatory to participate in the workshop. Maximum participation is 12 students for the workshop portion.

COSTS

Pruning Course (Zoom): \$45 ea. | **Course Recap (onsite):** \$20 ea. | **All-day Workshop (onsite):** \$100

Register and Pay at: <https://www.greshamjapanesegarden.org/happenings/pruning-program/>

Fundamentals of Pruning via Zoom: Thursday, February 9th, 6-8pm

In the Fundamentals of Pruning course students will cover more than just how to make cuts and shape plants within the landscape. Topics discussed will range from why we prune, what tools should be used, and even some basic plant biology—all of which form the foundation and provide the necessary background knowledge needed to prune woody plants correctly. After covering these synergistic topics, the instructor will discuss how to approach a variety of plants found in landscapes.

Fundamentals of Pruning Course Recap Onsite: Saturday, February 11th, 12:30-1:30pm

This is an optional one-hour Course Recap to the Fundamentals of Pruning course.

LINCOLN PROUD, INSTRUCTOR: See website for bio.



Introduction to Aesthetic Pruning Approach: March 9th, Thursday 6-8pm

Learn to apply the aesthetic pruning approach to trees and shrubs in your garden, including how to assess your tree, identify the role it will play in your garden, and develop a pruning plan to achieve your goals.

Introduction to Aesthetic Pruning Approach Course Recap: Saturday, March 11th, 12:30-1:30pm

This is an optional one-hour Course Recap to the Introduction to Aesthetic Pruning Approach course.

MARYANN LEWIS, INSTRUCTOR: See website for bio.



Assessing and Pruning in an Overgrown Landscape: April 13th, Thursday 6-8pm

Managing an overgrown landscape can be overwhelming. How do you even start? Learn ways to gracefully bring your landscape back into a scaled composition.

Assessing and Pruning in an Overgrown Landscape Course Recap: Sat., April 15th, 12:30-1:30pm

This is an optional one-hour Course Recap to the Assessing and Pruning in an Overgrown Landscape course.

FRANCHESKA SNYDER, INSTRUCTOR: See website for bio.



Pruning Workshop

In addition to the Zoom classes and onsite Recaps, GJG is offering a hands-on all-day workshop in May. The workshop will be limited to 12 participants with two instructors for an optimal learning experience.

<https://www.greshamjapanesegarden.org/happenings/pruning-program/>

East County's Hidden Treasure

by Mary Marrs



Laura and Tom Dufala, Bentwood Tree Farm

Well-known in the tree nursery community and sought out for their niwaki-style trees, Tom and Laura Dufala say it's their relationships with others that mean the most to them. And from their Bentwood Tree Farm in Boring, Oregon, they are glad to connect people to the beauty of nature with their trees.

Through their volunteering, donation of trees, hands-on teaching, along with the sale of their distinctive trees throughout the US, they've helped many appreciate the restorative power of nature.

This is most evident at the Oregon State Penitentiary in Salem, where Tom and Laura are involved with the Healing Garden, the on-site Japanese garden built by the adults in custody. Assisting renowned garden designer Hoichi Kurisu, the Dufala's not only donated over two dozen trees, but volunteer several times a year, teaching the adults in custody how to prune and maintain the plants.

"It's been the most fulfilling experience," Tom said with a smile. He commends the men who put in the hours and sweat to build the garden and raised all the needed funds. He added that the men take care of every plant, every day, and says it's probably the nicest garden in the state.

For forty years, the couple has put their own hard work and sweat into their 4-acre farm of over 2000 trees. Using their ornamental horticulture and aesthetic pruning training, they cultivate conifers and deciduous trees in their natural "cloud pruning" style. Different from bonsai which refers to plants grown in containers and traditionally less than 4-feet tall, niwaki are "garden trees" which are manipulated while in the ground.

Initially interested in bonsai, the Dufala's found it easier to cultivate trees while growing in the ground. They have a knack for bringing out features such as gnarled trunks, outstretched branches, and rounded cloud-like canopies. Laura, who always had an eye for pruning and unique plant structure, said her mother took her to the Portland Japanese Garden when she was young and they fell in love with the garden's aesthetic design. At home, they practiced pruning the trees in their own yard.

But niwaki is more than pruning. The duo say they look at the tree's energy as it comes out of the ground and enhance its character, uniqueness, and asymmetry by bending and twisting it using bamboo canes. Sometimes they use wire and twine to guide the trunk and branches. Laura calls it 'dancing with the tree'.

Pruning helps the tree in its natural progression toward maturity, and Tom and Laura use their artistry to accentuate motion and drama in their trees. They're modest when saying they just see the plant's natural beauty, that the tree speaks to them, and they just help it.

After many years, they understand how different trees respond and how their simple actions can create long-lasting effects in the tree over time.

"We bend a branch one way," Tom says, *"knowing that it may want to stretch*

out the other way toward the sun." They know that it may naturally bend back, creating a unique and expressive curve in its trunk. They also don't waste the tree's energy and force it in a direction it doesn't want to go. With their skills, artist's eye, and patience, they coax out the tree's character of maturity, creating the impression that it's larger and older than it actually is.

Some say that the Dufala's talent is a dying art, which is why those who have trained with them feel lucky. Tom and Laura say they really enjoy teaching aesthetic pruning, sharing their expertise, and meeting a lot of amazing people along the way. Laura said that for her, aesthetic pruning is the way she experiences nature, plants, and the people who "get it" and understand what they do and how they do it.

"Sharing our craft with others is what's important to us."

And Tom and Laura have a heart for those who experience something special when working with plants. They've witnessed this in the adults in custody who built and maintain the Healing Garden. They've seen the men embrace the simplicity of nature, and be moved by the connection they feel to the trees. Tom said that when he and Laura first became involved with the prison garden, they never imagined the impact their trees would have on the men.

Their impact in the community continues. The couple donated a 4-foot *Pinus thunbergii* or Japanese black pine to the Gresham Japanese Garden for their auction (see next page). They also donated a fourteen-year-old, 8-foot *Pinus thunbergii* for the Garden's Kyodo Garden.

Again, Tom and Laura Dufala are showing us what's important to them: connecting with others through their skill, artistry, and love of nature.

Get Ready to Bid “The Finishing Touch” Online Auction

Raising funds to update the Garden’s Resource Center



**Bidding starts Dec 4th at 8am
and ends Dec 7th at 8pm**

- One week vacation at oceanfront studio in Port Orchard
- Aesthetic pruning of a specimen tree
- Wine tasting for 8 with Sommelier in the Garden
- A pre-packaged landscape and design consultation
- Two tickets to the Oregon Symphony in spectacular seats
- Homemade desserts for a year
- Handcrafted birdhouse
- Live-edge Sycamore maple bench
- “Never been stepped on” Persian rug
- Blazer tickets
- 4’ Pinus thunbergii
- And many, many more!



Auction website

auctria.events/GJG



What is an Online Auction?

With an “Online Auction”, you look at the images and read the descriptions on the auction’s webpage (auctria.events/GJG.)

If you are interested in bidding on the item, you place a bid from the comfort of your home or anywhere you happen to be. You will receive a confirmation of your bid and will be notified if someone outbids you by text or email to give you the opportunity to bid again. You will not be asked for your credit card payment until the very end, and only if you won an item. “Buy it Now” (at ~1.5x the value) means no one can outbid you and the item is yours.

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