

Tsuru 鶴 Soars

Friends of the Gresham Japanese Garden Newsletter



Open for Business



All the work in 2023 remodeling our building into a beautiful Japanese-inspired architectural dream is proving to be a nice rental option for our community. It also really helps us fund the maintenance and supplies needed to operate. Yet, there is so much to think about, from preparing

rental agreements to discussing the layout of the room, to protecting the property from damage. The volunteers are working through all the ins and outs and we couldn't be more pleased to offer the Kyoudou Center and Tsuru Island for rent to the community.

*kyoudou center
and cherry blossoms
spring smile*

— Bill Peterson



Seating arrangement can be customized to create a festive event.

Find all the information at:
[Greshamjapanese-garden.org/
reservations/](https://greshamjapanese-garden.org/reservations/)

Omotenashi: Japanese Hospitality

by Sue Protz

Last month I had the opportunity to attend the North American Japanese Garden Association's (NAJGA) International Conference in Fort Worth, Texas. The International Conference attracts the best of the best speakers from abroad and North America.

A speaker's presentation that really resonated with me was Jennifer Gunji-Ballsrud, Director of the University of Illinois Japan House. Her topic was OMOTENASHI: Japanese Hospitality. She explained, "Omotenashi is an offering to guests without anticipating anything in return. It is taking care of others wholeheartedly and genuinely. Hospitality without superficiality."

"The essence of omotenashi is service from the heart. And it's without expectations of getting something in return. It means just not providing outstanding service, but by providing hospitality that goes up and beyond the expectations of the person receiving the service.

The essence of omotenashi is service from the heart.

Omotenashi entails paying very close attention, thinking carefully about the needs of the guests, and acting before even one asks for anything."

This presentation resonated with me for a few reasons. First, I'm always searching for ways to describe our director Jim Card's hospitality. He goes out of his way to make you feel good. His kindness towards people and situations is genuine. He exudes and leads with omotenashi, and he doesn't even know it.

Another reason this presentation resonated is because GJG is testing the introduction of an Ambassador Program at Tsuru Island this summer. Volunteers will be trained the omotenashi way as they greet visitors entering the Japanese garden. We will anticipate the needs of our guests and act with genuine intentions.

And last, we are now renting out the Kyoudou Center, Ebetsu Plaza and Tsuru Island. The remodeled Kyoudou Center is a beautiful venue, and we are receiving many requests for renting. We have a few 85-90th birthdays, graduations, and bridal showers. The volunteers are practicing omotenashi, too; they don't know it has a Japanese name.

An interesting example in Japan of omotenashi Jennifer Gunji-Ballsrud described is riding the Shinkansen, Japan's railway system. The cleaning crew comes in between train stops and



A cleaning crew in Japan bowing to the people riding the Shinkansen because of omotenashi.

meticulously cleans the inside of the trains. After they are finished, they stand outside and literally bow until every last guest has entered and sat down on the train. This is *not* something they do for people to give them gratitude, or expect thanks. They do this because of omotenashi.

What better way for the Gresham Japanese Garden, a Japanese-focused organization completely run by volunteers who serve with their heart, adopt the omotenashi way. You won't see us bowing, but you will see volunteers happy to assist you.

Look for more articles in future newsletters of examples of omotenashi in Japan. They're really quite remarkable examples.

俳句

HAIKU CORNER

a line borrowed
from another poet
spring rain

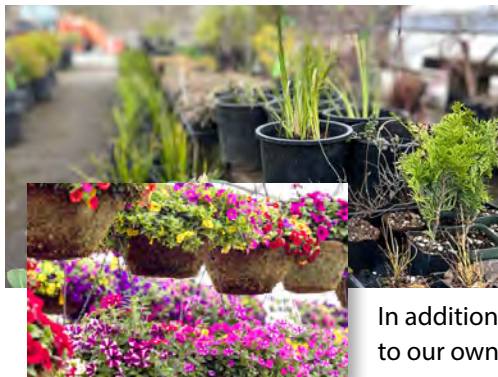
- Paul M.

春雨や相に相生の松の声
harusame ya ai ni aoi no matsu no koe

*spring rain--
growing side by side
whispering pines*

- Issa

Plant Sale



In addition to our own inventory,

many nurseries are donating trees and shrubs for our only fundraiser this year, a plant sale May 9-10 at 410 N Main Ave Gresham. In partnership with Gresham Historical Society's flower sale, we'll have something for everyone.

KATU AM Northwest



Thank you Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce for directing tourism dollars towards 'local escapes' in Gresham. They chose three Gresham destinations; Rockwood Marketplace, the Gresham Japanese Garden, and in July, Gresham's Art Fair.

You can [watch the clip here](#).

Partnership Enhances Student Experience

Al's Garden & Home in Gresham is helping our students explore the next stage in their lives. Through a partnership with the Gresham Japanese Garden's Exploratory Program, Al's is interning our Exploratory students that are in their final semester in the school system. The internship offers students the opportunity to take the horticulture skills and knowledge they acquired over the past three years into a real job setting.



"The whole staff at Al's has been so enthusiastic and excited," said Assistant Store Manager Lyla Hunt. "They know they are contributing to these students' work experience and making a difference in our community."

Since 2019, the Garden's Exploratory Program has provided special needs students from Gresham-Barlow School District's Adult Living Program with hands-on gardening skills and practical work experience. Focusing on horticulture, the students learn about seed germination, transplanting, pruning, plant identification, and plant health. Working in the greenhouse and around all the garden spaces, the students learn how to do routine maintenance too.

Now as interns they can put everything they learned in a retail environment. In late February, six of the ten students began interning at Al's twice a week for two-hour shifts. GJG sends a Garden volunteer to Al's to act as their job coach.

"We are really impressed with the level of independence and knowledge that the students bring in with them," commented Store Manager Jonathan Faith. "All of them already have knowledge of plants and plant care."

This had always been the goal of the Exploratory Program: to help students that need a little extra boost develop job skills that meet potential employers' expectations and work needs.

"It was absolutely the right decision to partner with the Gresham Japanese Garden," said Faith. He added that they're re-

ally happy to contribute to the students' work experience, and the bonus is the seeing the students' joy and confidence nurtured by Al's employees.

On one day, Faith led the interns in a pot-in-a-pot project to enhance curb appeal. Together, they dug empty pots in the ground then inserted a second pot of the same pot size of annual flowers. He explained that this method makes it easy to swap out flowers when the time comes. "It was something different to do, and it was fun sharing it with the students," he said, and hopes that they'll get to switch out the pansies with new flowers before the end of their intern-



Florencio checking the irrigation tubing.

ship. Working on new tasks and with some different equipment, the students also learned about drip irrigation systems and helped troubleshoot for leaks, identified plants as they cleaned pots and moved stock, navigated push cars, and organized and restocked plants by their tags. One day, they learned about Mason bees, including implanting live cocoons into bee trays for the store's bee house.

It is a big adjustment going from a controlled space into a work environment. The two Garden volunteers that act as job coaches also help with making the transition easier on them, assisting when necessary. The coaches are proud of the students for taking on the internship, knowing that interacting with people and learning unfamiliar tasks can be scary.

"It's fulfilling to see them use the knowledge and skills they've acquired in our greenhouse and gardens," job coach Deb said. She added that the students are beginning to see that their skills and knowledge are valuable and fit into real world jobs. While cueing them to listen and learn from their supervisors, the coaches also remind them to have fun



Store manager Lyla showing intern Alana seed packets.

and enjoy themselves.

Since starting the internship, Lyla said that the students have opened up more, engaged more, are asking questions and being curious about the plants. The first time she heard one of the more quieter students laughing because she was happy, made her day. "I'm very excited seeing the students grow, and I like teaching them something we love... gardening!"

Jonathan and Lyla both agree that staff can see that the students enjoy coming here and being surrounded by plants. They especially relish showing the students what it's like working in the garden and nursery industry.

Activities Director Sue Protz says, "Al's has provided the final transitional phase in breaking down barriers to success. It's difficult exiting school into the workforce with no prior work experience, especially students with challenges. It's been our dream to get to this stage of the program." She added, "Al's staff is a great role model. They treat the students with such respect and care, and are giving them the opportunity to explore their strengths and interests."

Jonathan concurred saying that partnering with the Garden is a great opportunity for the students *and* their employees. "We'd love to continue the internships next school year!"



Yozakura Festival

Yes, the cherry blossoms arrived early this year. GJG originally planned to start the festival on the 27th, but Mother Nature had her way. We quickly bumped up the schedule and on the 23rd we put on an absolutely magical event. As the sky got darker and darker, the cherry trees' blossoms shined more and more. An unexpected surprise was seeing the reflection of the trees in the windows spanning the

facade of the Kyoudou Center.

Mitsuki Dazai, artistic director of Oregon Koto Kai played two beautiful sets including Sakura Sakura.

Oregon Koto Kai to perform again on March 30. We're expecting another magical night. The April 6th performance is cancelled due to the early season, but don't despair, the cherry trees are in perfect condition to show off in the coming years.



Mitsuki Dazai performance on the patio of the Kyoudou Center.

Pruning Workshops for May

Instructor bios are on website. [REGISTER ON WEBSITE](#)

Spring Pruning Hands-on Workshop, Onsite at Vanport International: Saturday, May 4th, 10am–4pm – \$100

FRANCESKA SNYDER, INSTRUCTOR: Designed for the intermediate pruner looking to advance their knowledge through experiential learning. Students will prune a variety of plants and trees appropriately for the time of year. The workshop will be limited to 12 participants for an optimal experience. The location is a Japanese garden at Vanport Manufacturing in Boring, Oregon originally designed by Hoichi Kurisu.

Spring Maintenance on Pines: Saturday, May 18th, 12:00pm–2:00pm - \$45

LAURA DUFALA, INSTRUCTOR: Learn all about the why's and how's of pruning and candling pines. Laura will candle, needle, and prune a few pines on Tsuru Island for show and tell. This workshop is in person. Bring your gloves. Laura may turn the class into a collaborative session.