

# Tsuru 鶴 Soars

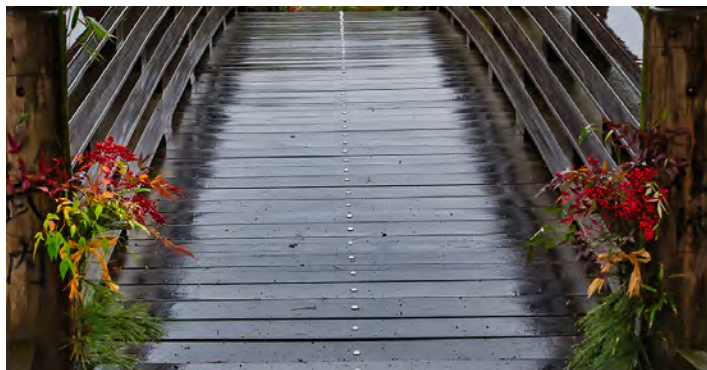
Friends of the Gresham Japanese Garden Newsletter



## Inviting Good Fortune

**E**very year ikebana instructor Nana Bellerud and bonsai instructor Mark Vossbrink build *kadomatsu* (gate pine), 門松 outside the entrance to Tsuru Island.

*Kadomatsu* is a traditional Japanese New Year decoration featuring bamboo, pine, and plum branches symbolizing longevity, prosperity, and steadfastness. They are placed at the entrances of



*Kadomatsu wishes you good fortune in the garden.*

doors or buildings to invite good fortune into the space for all who enter.

Its other purpose is to welcome Japanese spirits. By honoring and receiving in this way, they want to return

winter colors  
red holly berries  
an empty bench  
— Bill Peterson

and ensure a bountiful harvest.

It is one of many Japanese cultural traditions that the Gresham Japanese Garden and our instructors are honored to embrace and share. Welcome!



# Akemashite Omedetou Gozaimasu! Happy New Year!

by Mary Dickson

Visiting Japan is fun any time, but New Year's is special, since it is the most significant holiday on the Japanese calendar. The many customs and events leading to January 1 make it a festive time.

You start in December by thoroughly cleaning your home and paying all your debts, symbolizing spiritual purification, a practice is called *osouji*. You also adorn your door with *shimekazari*, a rice straw rope, which purifies your home, as well as a *kadomatsu* decoration for your entryway (see front page article.)

You don't have to worry about sending Christmas cards, since very few people in Japan celebrate Christian holidays, but you send *nengajo*, New Year's cards, to your friends, family, and business associates. The post office delivers them on New Year's Day.

Even if you don't consider yourself religious, you may observe certain Buddhist traditions, including visiting a temple on New Year's Eve (*omisoka*), when large bells are rung 108 times (*joya no kane*), starting before midnight and ending exactly as the new year begins. 108 represents cleansing of 108 worldly passions, the multitude of desires and negative emotions that humanity grapples with, which lead to suffering and hinder spiritual growth. As 108 tolls

resonate through the chilly night air, they carry forward the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of not only individuals and families, but of an entire nation.

On your way home after *joya no kane*, you stop at a noodle stand and eat *toshikoshi*, buckwheat noodles, which symbolize longevity.

On New Year's Day, you may join thousands of others who go to a Buddhist temple to offer prayers for the new year, a tradition known as *hatsumode*. At the temple, you might purchase an *omamori*, a lucky talisman that you carry with you in a small bag. You can also buy an *omikuji*, a preprinted fortune for the year.

Though adults don't normally exchange gifts, children receive *otoshidama*, money presented in colorful envelopes.



A traditional *osechi ryori* meal.

Later in the day, you may join family and friends for the traditional *osechi ryori*

meal featuring a variety of beautiful and tasty dishes.

A more contemporary New Year's tradition is to listen to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Every year since 1983, a choir of 10,000 singers has gathered to sing the choral climax!

A fun tradition is *fukubukuro*, where stores offer "lucky bags" containing heavily discounted merchandise. Some stores include high-value products in a few bags, even plane tickets to Hawaii! When someone opens one of those, a cheer goes up throughout the store!

2025 is designated as the Year of the Wood Snake in the Chinese zodiac. People born during this year are believed to be intuitive, strategic, and intelligent. People are encouraged to focus on self-development and long-term goals. With Wood as its element in

*2025 is designated as the Year of the Wood Snake in the Chinese zodiac.*

2025, the Wood Snake brings an added layer of growth, resilience, and forward-looking energy.

No matter how you celebrate New Year's in Japan, it is a time for fun, reflection, and preparation for the coming year.



Happy New Year

- Nana Bellerud, GJG Ikebana instructor

## Fulfilling Event



After conducting three wreath making workshops, Sue Protz's most gratifying workshop is with the adult learners from GJG's job development program.

During their Thursday class, students learned to trim, manipulate and assemble a holiday wreath. It's a highlight to see such joy in students taking home a wreath they made.

## Directional Sign



It's reassurance that Garden dollars were put to good use when you observe visitors reading the multi lingual directional sign at the entrance of Tsuru Island.

The sign, identifying all the features of the GJG, replaced several confusing signs. We constantly strive to make the GJG more welcoming.

# The Garden's Accomplishments in 2024

## JANUARY

Fulfilled a goal in our Exploratory Worksite Program by landing a 3-month internship for our adult learners with Al's Garden & Home Gresham. Six students gained work skills in Al's real-life job setting. This year we are preparing three students for the experience.

## MARCH

Because of generous volunteers, Tsuru Island received a new lantern to greet visitors and shine reflections into the water.

## MARCH-APRIL

We added Hina matsuri and Yozakura to the list of free festivals for the community. Both of these festivals were a big draw, and we will return annually.

## MARCH-NOVEMBER

Finished the exterior of the Kyoudou Center and its roof with funding from donors.

## MAY

A successful plant sale raised over \$6,000. We plan to have one every other year, with the next in May 2026.

Also hosted a Friday morning Chamber of Commerce meeting, with another scheduled for next September.

## JUNE-AUGUST

We developed the north entrance garden AND added a monument sign for the Kyoudou Center.

## JULY

Redesigned the main pathway to ease congestion on Tsuru Island.

## SEPTEMBER

We noticed that visitors to Tsuru Island didn't know about the areas south of the Island that featured additional gardens. By adding the new sign (see photo on previous page), we hope to encourage visitors to have a more inclusive experience when visiting Main City Park.

We also participated, for the first time, in the Teddy Bear Parade and will make that an annual event for the Garden.

## DECEMBER

For the second year, Sue Protz co-hosted a wreath making workshop with Burns Feed Store, benefiting SnowCap Charities. All 50 tickets sold out! Sue also conducted two more workshops as a fundraiser for the Garden.

## 2024

After an extensive remodel, the Kyoudou Center was rented for private and community events. The Aesthetic Pruning Program contracted with five instructors who taught skilled pruning classes and horticulture interests. Hillside Landscaping Maintenance personnel took classes, rented the Kyoudou Center, and volunteered, becoming a true partner of GJG.

*A huge accomplishment for the year was the creation of an outdoor exhibition area behind the Kyoudou Center, funded by a generous donation from a repeat donor. In 2025, we'll expand relationships with the Portland Bonsai Society and other organizations that may like to exhibit in this space. If bonsai or chrysanthemums are of interest to you, we're looking for Garden representatives. Email [sue@greshamjapanesegarden.com](mailto:sue@greshamjapanesegarden.com) for details.*



A young visitor to the Hina matsuri festival.



Yozakura at Ebetsu Plaza.



GJG wreath making workshop.



Almost complete exhibition area.

# 2025 Pruning Program Classes

REGISTER AT [GRESHAMJAPANESEGARDEN.ORG](http://GRESHAMJAPANESEGARDEN.ORG)



**All Day Hands-on Winter Pruning Workshop: At Vanport, Saturday, January 11, 2025, 10am-4pm – \$100**  
**FRANCHESKA SNYDER, INSTRUCTOR** For intermediate pruners, a hands-on opportunity to prune a variety of plants at a Japanese garden in Boring, OR, learning alongside Francheska Snyder, a professional aesthetic pruner trained in Japan who owns her own business, Niwa Method. This will be the Gresham Japanese Garden's fifth opportunity to prune at Vanport International. There are still many plants that need to be restored to their size and brought back to the vision of the original garden designer, Hoichi Kurisu.



**A Recent History of Japanese Maple Cultivars Webinar (Since 1945): On Zoom, Thursday, January 23, 2025, 6:30-8pm – ~~\$30~~ \$20**

**NORM JACOBS, INSTRUCTOR:** Instructor Norm Jacob says that we are in a period of change in the world of Japanese maples with the future uncertain. He believes that many new varieties in the past 30 years are still rare or are just becoming available for lower prices. This class will focus on JMs introduced since 1945 to 2018. *Zoom course is recorded and available for two weeks.*



**Pruning Fruit Trees: Onsite, Saturday, January 25, 2025, 1-3pm – \$45**

**JONATHAN FAITH, INSTRUCTOR:** Late winter is a good time to prune fruit trees because they are dormant, and it is easy to see the tree's structure to decide which cuts to make. You can confidently know that your tree will heal pruning cuts during the upcoming spring. Faith will demonstrate how to prune apple trees, cherry trees, and hopefully if Faith can obtain, plum trees and Asian pear trees. In addition, Faith will discuss cross pollination, fertilizers, and fungicide and insecticide sprays. *Don't miss out on a discount coupon to All's Garden & Home when you attend the class!*



**Fundamentals of Conifers Webinar: On Zoom, Thursday, February 6, 2025, 6-8pm – \$30**

**MARYANN LEWIS, INSTRUCTOR:** In this webinar on Zoom, instructor Maryann Lewis will cover a variety of conifer basics, from identifying their cultivar and growth patterns to pruning approach. Learn fundamental pruning techniques for your favorite conifers including pines, spruce, hinoki and others, and how to analyze each cultivar. This class will help you feel comfortable making pruning decisions so you can enjoy conifers even more. *Zoom courses are recorded and available for two weeks.*

**AND**

**Pruning Conifers in the Garden: Onsite, Sunday, February 9, 2025, 10:00am–Noon - \$45**

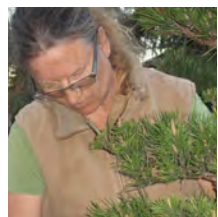
**MARYANN LEWIS, INSTRUCTOR**

This class will build upon the knowledge gained in 'Pruning Fundamentals for Conifers' on the 6th of February. It will be beneficial to take the Zoom webinar. We will look at various small conifers in and around Tsuru Island and apply useful techniques and strategies that can be used in any garden style.



**Introduction to the Aesthetic Pruning Approach: On Zoom, Thursday, March 6, 2025, 6-8pm - \$30**

**MARYANN LEWIS, INSTRUCTOR:** Aesthetics are integral to the stewardship of trees in our gardens. In this online course learn to apply the aesthetic pruning approach to trees and shrubs, including how to assess your plant materials, identify the role they play in your garden, and develop a pruning plan to achieve your goals. Aesthetic pruning works in any garden style. *Zoom courses are recorded and available for two weeks.*



**Spring Candling of Pines: Onsite, Saturday, May 3, 2025: \$45**

**LAURA DUFALA, INSTRUCTOR:**

Learn all about the whys and hows of pruning and candling pines. Laura will candle, needle, and prune a few pines at the Gresham Japanese Garden. This workshop is in person. Bring your gloves. Laura may turn the class into a collaborative session.

