Spring Signs

Spring’s new green shoots tell a story. This green story starts with a tree, a recently planted Stewartia tree, now living as a focal point in our back garden at the Portland Center of Self-Realization Fellowship. That planting meant some hard work, as you can see in the photos in the April-May edition of Portland Center’s e-newsletter.

The tree’s new buds foreshadow more than the change from winter to spring. Dormant becomes vibrant. Brown sticks sprout green life. Fluttering leaves and waving blossoms dance out winter doldrums in our greenspace. This tree is a portend of more good things to come.

This particular Stewartia tree, including the supplies and materials, are all gifts from friends and members of SRF. Meeting during the pandemic, the Managing Council gave the green light to the Center’s Landscape Design Committee’s proposal. The idea of things to come is a PCSRF version of a “Temple of Leaves.”

While Mother Center and congregational input are still in process, the intent is to recreate the lovely Temple of Leaves that graces the grounds of the Mother Center in Los Angeles. This natural sanctuary atop Mount Washington is a sacred place where Paramahansa Yogananda taught and meditated. It is revered as an inspirational power spot.

Even though the final design is still a work in progress, thanks to the design vision of Bruce Mosias, with input from Peter Stasch, Lisa Buchholz, Claudia Mosias and Darden Bynum, a plan and the planning process began in earnest. A new temple of leaves starts with one tree. But time and the gift of the Stewartia tree were of the essence. The gift of the tree meant that it needed to go in the ground and the Managing Council’s decisive encouragement made it possible to plant it when the time was right, in mid February. The stewartia will provide shade as well as beauty throughout the seasons of the year.

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Darden Bynum