

**PUBLICATION OF  
THE GREATER  
PALM BEACH  
ROSE SOCIETY**

**AN AFFILIATE OF  
THE AMERICAN  
ROSE SOCIETY**

# The Rose Petal

**The Greater Palm Beach Rose Society**  
Founded 1970  
Promoting Rose Growing in the Palm Beaches  
for Over 40 Years



## Calendar

- **Monday, Jan. 24 - 7:30pm, GPBRS Meeting**, Mounts Auditorium  
Topic: Pruning your Roses
- **Monday, Feb. 7- Board Meeting**, 7:00pm at Beverly Lichtenstein's home
- **Saturday, Feb. 26 - New Member Brunch**, 10:30am at Mounts Rose Garden, for all members who joined in 2010. Details to follow
- **Monday, Feb. 28, 7:30pm, GPBRS Meeting**, Mounts Auditorium. Topic: TBA

## Inside this issue:

December Holiday Party Photos	2
Pruning Guidelines for Spring Blooms	3
January Birthdays	4
January in Your Rose Garden	7
Lists of Consulting Rosarians/Officers	9
DSD Calendar	10

Page 1

January 2011

## President's Message by Dr. Al Nessmith



I found an old Chinese proverb in a garden in Virginia that said: "To be happy for a week, kill a pig. To be happy for a month, take a wife. To be happy all your life . . . plant a garden." I won't vouch for the first two, but the last is very often true and especially if you have success in growing roses. With a garden, the more you put into it, the more you are rewarded. The same is true of our Rose Society. I challenge each of us, individually, to make the effort to benefit all by making the society the best that it possibly can be, for the benefit of all.

Our efforts will benefit ourselves, the Mounts Botanical Garden, the Deep South District and the American Rose Society, all of

which depend, to an extent, on how well we succeed. I believe that we will have monthly programs which will be both informative and very entertaining. We made good progress toward that end at our first board meeting of the new year. Plans for the April 9<sup>th</sup> Rose Show are well underway, and we will report on that at the January 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. Also, at that time we will have information and a demonstration on how to prune for the best blooms. As always, refreshments will be served. This month's meeting we will feature an Ice Cream Social.

I appreciate your confidence in electing me as your President. I am expecting this to be an exciting and enjoyable year with all of us working together. Thank you.

## Informative Pruning Demonstration Jan. 24

Geoff Coolidge will be demonstrating how to properly prune your rose bushes. He will bring a large potted rose to the meeting, using it to show the best techniques. He will also discuss how pruning can differ depending on age and type of roses.

Following the presentation and Q & A period, we will break for an ice cream social. Ice cream and

toppings will be supplied so you can make your own dessert masterpiece.

If you have any roses in bloom, bring them in to enter in the in-house show.

The meeting will begin at 7:30 PM on Monday, Jan. 24, at the Mounts Auditorium, 531 N. Military Trail in West Palm Beach. Doors open at 7:00. See you there!

**Editor's Corner**

Pruning pays off. When it comes to roses, proper pruning, sufficient fertilization and irrigation will reap rewards in the form of lots of strong new canes and beautiful blooms. If you are relatively new to growing roses you will learn a lot at the January meeting.

Remember, if you have a rose question send email it to me at

WHL2@prodigy.net I will cover it in the next newsletter.

The deadline for submission to the next issue is Feb. 7.

Hope to see you at our next meeting on Jan. 24.

Bill Langford,  
Newsletter Editor

**You Got a Problem with that?**

If you have questions about rose gardening or if you are having problems with your roses, contact a Consulting Rosarian. You can find their names and contact information listed on page 7.

**Photos from the Annual December Holiday Party**



Clockwise from upper left: Newly-installed director Necebie Langford; birthday girl Joanie Sanford; our new secretary Jacquie Perry and Second Vice-President/ Membership Chair Beverly Lichtenstein with immediate Past-President Bob Sanford



**Refreshments for January Meeting**

Beverly Lichtenstein will supply the ice cream and toppings for our Ice Cream Social.

**“A to Z” Plan for refreshments at upcoming meetings**

For the February meeting we are asking members who last names begin with an A or B to bring refreshments and act as hosts. We will progress down the alphabet for future meetings during 2011.

## PRUNING GUIDELINES FOR SPRING BLOOMS

Marty Pawlikowski, C.R., Central Florida Rose Society

Published in the Jan-Feb 2011 issue of Wind Chimes, Elaine Pawlikowski, Editor

Pruning rose bushes can be confusing, especially for a new rose grower. You're not sure where to start ... or what to do. You may even want to skip pruning altogether. I must confess, we have all been there. Let me assure you -- YOU can prune your roses!!! By following some basic pruning guidelines you and your roses will appreciate the fruits of your labors.

Basically four pieces of "equipment" are required for pruning chores:

1. Clean, sharp **by-pass** pruning shears;
2. Small key hole saw;
3. Brass bristled small brush (shaped like a large toothbrush and generally available from an auto part stores and home improvement stores in the welding section); and,
4. Heavy duty puncture proof gloves (for your protection).

**The best pruning shear design for pruning roses is the by-pass pruner**, which has two blades that cut like scissors. Anvil pruners, on the other hand, use a flat plate to push the cane against a single blade, which often results in crushed canes. **Anvil pruners are NOT recommended.** The importance of good quality **sharp by-pass pruning shears** cannot be over emphasized. Dull shears will leave ragged cuts on the canes that take longer to heal and are susceptible to dieback. An exceptional tool for maintaining sharp pruning shears is the Corona® Sharpening Tool (Model AC 8300), as shown in the photo (bottom right), which can be purchased at Lowe's or on the internet for less than \$10, a wise investment. This tool is extremely easy to use. All it takes is several passes along the edge of the blade as described in the instructions. If you cannot sharpen your shears, now is the time to take them in for sharpening or to buy a new pair of bypass pruners.

All roses need some type of pruning. If roses are not pruned for a number of years, plants deteriorate in appearance, often develop more than the usual disease and insect problems and the flowers become smaller and smaller. Pruning should be looked at as applying a few common sense principles to accomplish several tasks. These tasks are to remove dead, damaged, or diseased wood; remove crossing canes which rub against each other; keep the shrub from becoming a tangled mess; shape the plant. This will encourage the growth of flowering wood and open up the center of the bush to let in sunlight and air, which will minimize fungal diseases such as blackspot and mildew.



**BY-PASS PRUNING SHEARS ...**

The best style shears for pruning and deadheading roses



**ANVIL PRUNING SHEARS ...**

NOT recommended for roses



See Pruning a Grafted Rose Bush on Page 4



## January Birthdays

Sylvester Brady

Fred Frappier

Ellen Gager

Budd Leverenz

Happy Birthday and best wishes for many more!

### RAFFLE

You can win a rose bush or garden accessories at each meeting. Tickets are only \$1 each or 6 for \$5.



## Pruning a Grafted Rose Bush

(Continued from page 3)

As stated, the objective of pruning is to open up the center of the bush and reduce the plant to the most productive canes. The goal is to provide a vase-shaped structure. The first step in accomplishing this objective is the removal of dead, dying or diseased canes, twiggy or spindly growth and crossing, rubbing or broken canes/stems. On older, established bushes you should remove all thin, weak canes that are smaller than a pencil in diameter. Young bushes should only be cleaned of dead wood and lightly trimmed back.

The next pruning step on established bushes is to entirely remove older non-productive canes from the bud union. On grafted roses, the bud union is where the desired rose variety (the top portion of the bush) was joined to the rootstock (the bottom portion of the bush). It is from this union that new canes (basal breaks) emerge. Non-productive canes are generally those that are shriveled, dark brown, gray, turning yellow or black and can be also be identified by an abundance of bud scars and the absence of viable bud eyes on the cane. To remove these large canes from the bud union, a keyhole saw and puncture proof gloves are the instruments of choice. I should note that I no longer use a keyhole saw, but now use a cordless reciprocating saw, as it is much easier and has eliminated thorns in my hands. Both saws allow the cane to be cut flush with the bud union and the gloves keep the thorns from getting jammed into your hands. Leave the newest, most productive canes in place. We generally leave from 6 to 10 major canes on each bush (depending on the type of rose).

See Making the Right Cut on Page 5



# Cool Roses



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## Making the Right Cut

(Continued from page 4)

While down at ground level, inspect the plant for sucker growth, which are stems that originate from the rootstock below the bud union of a grafted rose. “Suckers” on grafted plants can be distinguished from the rest of the bush by differences in foliage and should be removed. If left to themselves, some suckers will eventually flower, showing blooms of the original variety and very different from the grafted canes. The most common rootstock for Florida is *Rosa Fortuniana*, followed by Dr. Huey. If allowed to bloom, *Fortuniana* has small white flowers and Dr. Huey’s flowers are red. If suckers are not removed, these fast-growing sprouts cause the bush to spend its energy on them, instead of on the upper canes of the desired variety that should be making flowers. The best way to remove sucker growth is to follow the sucker to its point of origin on the rootstock and to twist and tear it off where it emerges. Also, gently scrape around the area where the sucker was removed with your fingernail to remove any side buds. Cutting suckers off with pruning shears will result in the regrowth of several suckers where only one was originally growing.

When the above tasks are complete, you will be left with the remaining healthy major canes. These canes will then be reduced to approximately one-third to one-half of their total height. You want to cut these back, generally, to an outward facing bud eye. Bud eyes can be found all along the canes at the leaf axils, which is where a leaf cluster is, or was,

connected to the cane (see bud eye photo on page 6). It is from these bud eyes that the new growth will emerge. Cutting to an outward-facing bud eye will direct new growth outward, away from the center of the bush to produce an open-centered plant. The pruning cut should be made at about a 45 degree angle, about one quarter-inch above the bud eye. If the bush has foliage present, outward-facing bud eyes will be easy to find. However, cuts are often made further down canes where there is no foliage to guide us to the appropriate location to make the cut. Under these circumstances, look for dormant bud eyes on these canes by locating where the foliage was once connected. The bud eye is normally visible as a slightly swelled “bump” above the surface of the cane. Correctly making these primary pruning cuts is the real key to success in pruning.

After the non-productive canes are removed and the remaining canes reduced in height, I recommend gently brushing the bud union with the small wire brush to remove the hard corky bark that has formed over the last year. Avoid brushing off any basal breaks that may be emerging. A basal break is a strong new cane



— The bud union, where the top portion of the bush was joined to the rootstock. (Note the old crusty bark on bud union)

— Two “suckers” growing from the rootstock below the bud union

See Approach Rose Pruning on Page 6

## Approach Rose Pruning 'Like an Artist'

(Continued from page 5)

growing from the base of the plant (from the bud union). Basal breaks are very desirable as they replace the older, worn-out canes that were removed, present lots of bud eyes for new growth and yield the biggest flowers. These new canes increase the longevity and productivity of your rose bushes. Removing the corky bark allows new basal breaks to grow from the bud union that might not otherwise push through the hard bark.



**Bud eyes** can be found all along the canes at the leaf axils, where a leaf cluster is, or was, connected to the cane.

Pruning Cuts



Stem cut too high  
above bud eye

Stem cut too close  
to bud eye

Stem cut  
just right!

Upon completing the above pruning activities, I remove the remaining foliage from the plant (established plants, not young bushes). Some area rosarians leave the foliage. I have tried both ways and found that leaving the foliage results in fungus and insect problems (mainly increased mites) later on in the season. I believe that removing the foliage removes any insects, spores and diseases harboring on the foliage. Those that leave the foliage after pruning believe that method produces better roses in the long run. Why not try both methods on a few of your bushes and see which works best for you? The final pruning activities are to clean up the beds by picking up and throwing away any fallen foliage, blooms, petals, etc. Finish by thoroughly spraying the pruned plants with a fungicidal spray mixed at the recommended dilution.

In conclusion, quoting from Tommy Cairns in *The Rose Exhibitors Forum*: "While you can learn from reading books, it is the practical aspects of your own garden that will ultimately educate you in the finer points of pruning. What is marvelous is that experimentation will teach you which varieties can be pruned hard (canes 2-3 feet or less) and which ones lightly (4 foot canes). The basic understanding of your rose varieties will enhance your enjoyment of rose growing, bringing a degree of satisfaction and pride. Approach rose pruning like an artist about to create a masterpiece. Imagine the bush as you will want it to look in the spring and the inspiration will follow."

### **Time to Renew your GPBRS Membership**

Your GPBRS membership expired Dec. 31. (If you already renewed - thank you). Please bring your dues (\$18 or \$25+) to the next meeting. See the application on page 7. New members who joined in June 2010 or after are paid through Dec. 2011.

## **January in Your Rose Garden**

Mark Prue, Consulting Rosarian, Tampa Rose Society

Published in the January 2011 edition of "Tampa Talks Roses," Louise Ellrod, Editor

As the calendar rolls over to 2011, you should take a few minutes to think back over the past 12 months concerning your rose garden. Was 2010 a good rose year? Did your work provide you with bigger and better blooms? Are your bushes healthier than this time last year? It is hoped that your membership in our rose society has been helpful to you.

This is the time of year when it is recommended that we do a major prune of our bushes. (*editors note: See "When to Prune" on page 8 for information on the best time to prune to have roses for the Greater Palm Beach Rose Show on April 9*). I prune my mature hybrid tea bushes to about waist-high level and eliminate old or diseased canes. Also, any smaller canes that cross are cut. The look you are aiming for is how an inverted umbrella appears. I recommend to strip off all leaves on the bush and pick up as many of them out of the rose bed as my back will allow me. Please note, for younger bushes that have been in the ground a year or less, forego the pruning. These young bushes need all the leaves they can get and should do just fine without pruning.

Once all my bushes have been pruned to the desired look, I then spray all the bare canes and the surrounding soil with lime sulfur. This is a fungicide like Dithane M-45 (which you should use regularly) with the added benefit of smelling horrible. Anything that smells as bad as lime sulfur cannot be good for blackspot, anthracnose and other overwintering fungi, which is the objective. The recommended dosage for lime sulfur is 10 tablespoons per gallon. This concoction is quite gritty and will clog the best sprayer tip you have. At the very least, strain through an old pair of pantyhose or even better - mix in a blender. I have an old blender that I only use for chemicals in the garden. Hit the puree button and stand back! A tip of the hat to fellow Tampa Rose Society member Clarence Prevatt for this idea. I used both the blender and the pantyhose last January and was clog-free. Please be sure to wear old clothes, gloves, eye protection and the like.

After a couple of days, you may wish to dab a little Elmer's glue-all on the ends of each of your pruning cuts you made to ward off cane borers. These insects like to nest in our canes if the ends are not sealed off. Best to wait until your pruning cuts have dried before applying the glue. Another task to try this month is to see how the earthworms in your garden are faring. Dig a couple of test holes to determine activity. The more the better. If earthworms are in your garden, your pH level is probably within the range it needs to be. But I would recommend to go the extra step and have your soil tested. Your county extension service provides the tests and there are quite a few pH testers on the market for the do-it-yourselfers among us. You may well be fertilizing properly, but if the soil is not healthy and the soil's pH is not where it needs to be, NO amount of fertilizer will work if the nutrients are prohibited from being used by your bushes roots. As if all the above were not

(See Fertilizing is a Must after Pruning on page 8)

## Fertilizing is a Must after Pruning

(Continued from page 7)

enough, we also like to recommend adding organics this time of year. You may choose to use a product like *Mills Magic Mix* or make up your own mixture. Again, for the purists who like to mix their own, this time tested recipe has worked for years in our area:

- 2 quarts dehydrated manure
- 1 quart alfalfa meal (pellets will do in a pinch)
- 1 quart cottonseed meal
- 2-3 cups sludge (Milorganite)
- 2 cups agricultural gypsum
- 1 or 2 cups fish meal

Spread this mixture around the base of each bush and lightly scratch into the soil. This is a slow-feeding method which will not burn your bushes or roots and will provide nourishment to the soil. By the second or third bloom cycle in the spring, your bushes will still be benefitting from this mix and should reward you with beautiful blooms. This is also a great time to replenish your ground covering - your mulch of choice. Whether it be pine bark, oak leaves, stabled horse manure or the like, make sure you have a cushion of three to four inches to help conserve moisture and retard weed growth. We recommend renewing your mulch at this time of year for the previously mentioned benefits. Plus, it is much easier to spread mulch in January rather than July!

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, do NOT neglect water this month (or any month). As we are in the dry season, make sure bushes are receiving at a minimum two the three inches per week - more is better! Also, this is a perfect time of year to transplant bushes if you need to. Go out about 20 inches around the base of the bush with a sharp spade. This will allow you to remove the bush with a minimum of damage to the roots. Plant it in its new home, water well, but wait until late March before you start fertilizing.

### When to Prune (to Have Blooms for GPBRS Rose Show)

Bill Langford, Consulting Rosarian

Timing your pruning to have blooms open on a specific date is anything but an exact science, especially considering our recent colder-than-normal winters. Staggering your pruning will help you have roses to bring to the Greater Palm Beach Rose Show on April 9. I will start pruning hybrid teas (HT) that have a lot of petals around Feb. 9 and gradually work down to the miniatures, having them all pruned no later than Feb 24. The prune-to-bloom cycle for the HT *Moonstone* is about 55 days, which, under ideal conditions, would make the date to prune Feb.13. Another popular HT, *Gemini*, requires about 50 days to bloom; minifloras range from 45 days for *Louisville Lady*, to 38 days for *Memphis King*.

You can prune part of a rose bush a few days before the target date and the rest of it a few days after, especially if it is a large bush. Obviously, if you have two bushes of the same variety, you should prune them 7-10 days apart. Staggering the pruning will improve your chances of having open blooms for the show. February is the best month to prune. The weather is almost sure to be cool (or downright cold like last year) and the rose bushes will be as close to dormant as they get in South Florida. We hope that you not only enter roses at the show, but also contribute them for us to display at the cut rose sales table.



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Rose Society  
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**NEW MEMBER**     **RENEWAL**

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**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES: \$18.00**

**CONTRIBUTING MEMBER: \$25.00 or more**

**(Membership period runs from January to  
December.)**

**Make checks payable to GPBRS and mail  
to: Beverly Lichtenstein, Membership,  
12273 Lacewood Lane, Wellington, FL**

**33414**

**Or you may bring payment to the meeting.**

### Consulting Rosarians

Our consulting Rosarians are appointed by the American Rose Society after spending years growing roses and being tested on their overall knowledge of roses and their care. They are willing to freely share this knowledge with anyone who loves and wants to grow roses. Please call on them for advice and help.

Sylvester Brady	561-842-9619	<a href="mailto:bradysjoy@bellsouth.net">bradysjoy@bellsouth.net</a>
Debbie Coolidge	561-684-2421	<a href="mailto:geoffcoolidge@comcast.net">geoffcoolidge@comcast.net</a>
Geoff Coolidge	561-684-2421	<a href="mailto:geoffcoolidge@comcast.net">geoffcoolidge@comcast.net</a>
Bill Langford	561-642-0200	<a href="mailto:WHL2@prodigy.net">WHL2@prodigy.net</a>
Evelyn Rose	561-432-7159	<a href="mailto:aserose@bellsouth.net">aserose@bellsouth.net</a>
Freda Smith	561-676-9333	<a href="mailto:golfgrrrl@aol.com">golfgrrrl@aol.com</a>

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## Happenings around the Deep South District of the American Rose Society

- Jan. 14-16, 2011** DSD Mid-Winter Meeting hosted by Gainesville R. S. - Holiday Inn, Lake City, Fla. - Visit the website for more information - [www.GainesvilleRoseSociety.com](http://www.GainesvilleRoseSociety.com)
- April 9, 2011** Greater Palm Beach R. S. Rose Show - Pine Jog Elementary School, West Palm Beach. Contact Bill Langford, (561) 642-0200, [WHL2@prodigy.net](mailto:WHL2@prodigy.net)
- April 16, 2011** Central Florida R. S. Rose Show - Harry P. Leu Gardens, Orlando. Contact Marty Pawlikowski, [pawlrose@cfl.rr.com](mailto:pawlrose@cfl.rr.com)
- April 16, 2011** Gainesville R. S. Rose Show - Kanapaha Botanical Gardens, Gainesville, Fla. Contact Ralph Stream, [streamj@gmail.com](mailto:streamj@gmail.com)

### **Enter In-house Rose Show**

Cut some roses from your garden and enter in the rose show at each meeting. You can enter any type of rose - one bloom per stem or a spray of two or more blooms on one stem.

Points are tallied for all winners, although only first places are published. Keep entering at every meeting and you could be the big winner in December!

### **Welcome New Members**

**Gail Anderson** - West Palm Beach

**Don Hill** - Loxahatchee

**Inez King** - West Palm Beach

**Mary Ann Kunkle** - Manalapan



## **GREATER PALM BEACH ROSE SOCIETY**

c/o William Langford, Editor  
7610 West Lake Drive  
West Palm Beach, FL 33406

561 642 0200

[WHL2@prodigy.net](mailto:WHL2@prodigy.net)