

Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden

"A Historic Landmark"

Issue 10

December 2009

Happy Holidays

What a year's it's been!

Re-accreditation and elevation to AARS Test Garden status. 835 new roses planted. Over 5,000 volunteer hours logged. A Rose Garden filled with a sea of bloom all season long. And that is just the beginning, Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden has inspired groups of volunteers in other cities – **Friends of the Morcom Rose Garden** in Oakland and **Friends of the McKinley Parks Rose Garden** in Sacramento.

In the past year, FSJRG received a lot of recognition and national awards for volunteerism, and as we go to press we have received word of another honor. FSJRG's story of community renewal will soon be featured on **President Obama's** national volunteer website, www.Serve.gov

As said at our *"We're Thankful for Our Volunteers"* event, each and every one of you has made the dream of a renewed Rose Garden a reality, and we are truly grateful for your enthusiasm, energy and dedication.

The renewal of the Rose Garden is a gift to the entire community. Thank you for touching the lives of so many and making the world a more beautiful place.

Inside This Issue:

Our Quick & Easy Pruning Method – Give a Day, Get a Disney Day – Annual Pruning Event-Show 'Em Way to Rose Garden – Update on AARS Test Beds, Planting Bare Root Roses – Gifts for the Gardener – Soils Dead or Alive – Participate, Appreciate, Donate



ANNUAL PRUNING of the Rose Garden Sat Jan 9 at 9:00 am

We have special gifts for volunteers who help prune the Rose Garden on Jan 9th

**FREE BARE ROOT ROSE and
FREE ADMISSION TO DISNEYLAND.**

Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden is excited to be participating in **"Give a Day, Get a Disney Day"** program; look for details on how you can receive your free ticket to the Magic Kingdom in this newsletter. In addition, volunteers who check-in by 9:00 am will receive a free bare-root rose courtesy of **STAR ROSES**. *Rain date is Jan 16.*

www.FriendsSJRoseGarden.org

Founders Beverly Rose
Hopper & Terry Reilly



Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden
is a non-profit 501(c)(3) all volunteer group
dedicated to preserving the Historic San Jose
Municipal Rose Garden

Our Quick & Easy Pruning Method

We use a simplified pruning program at the Rose Garden – it has been very successful. Not only have volunteers been able to quickly get the job done - **in the last two years 4,000 rosebushes have been pruned in about 2 hours!** - but the bushes are much stronger and produce more bloom throughout the year.

Stakes are put into each bed and marked at the proper height to cut. **Volunteers are told prune to level marked, but not below.** The next step is to remove all foliage and clean up debris from the base of the plant. *So easy anyone can do it!* Instruction is provided on how to make the “classic cut” – ¼ inch above an outward facing bud eye at 45 degree angle – but we don’t sweat it if the cut is not exact.



Our goal is **Pruning for Maximum Display**. Lots of canes are left on the bush – more than in traditional pruning. We want big bushes because that means big masses of bloom all season long.

What about crossing canes, thin and spindly growth, etc? After two years of growing stronger bushes we finally have the luxury of removing thinner less productive growth and in the weeks following the mass pruning event *Master Volunteers can help with selective pruning or Fine Tuning Pruning.*



Check out the training videos on our website www.FriendsSJRoseGarden.org

Join us on Sat Jan 9th. Bring a friend!

Simple Steps to Prune Roses

- 1. CLASSIC CUT** - Make cuts about 1/4 inch above an outward facing bud-eye, at 45 degree angle.
- 2. REMOVE 1/3 - 1/2 HEIGHT** - No more . . . hard or severe pruning is hard on the rose bush.
- 3. SPINDLY, DEAD STUFF TAKE OUT** - They're not going to produce flowers.
- 4. REMOVE ALL LEAVES & HIPS** - Snip or pull off all foliage removes over-wintering fungus.
- 5. CLEAN UP DEBRIS** - Pick up all fallen leaves, and any mess. Keep area around base of rose clean.



Give a Day, Get a Disney Day

Disney wants to inspire one million people to volunteer a day of service, and will be giving away **free tickets to Disneyland or Walt Disney World.**



Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden is participating in this exciting “**Give a Day, Get a Disney Day**” program for our **January 9th Annual Pruning** of the Rose Garden event, and here’s how it works:

BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2010,
register online at www.DisneyParks.com

Under volunteer opportunities look for **Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden**, and pre-register for the Jan 9 Annual Pruning event. Next, when you arrive to help prune on January 9th check-in at our registration table so we can verify your attendance and participation. After your service is completed and verified, you will receive from Disney a **one-day admission to Disneyland or Walt Disney World, FREE!**

Disneyland, the “Happiest Place on Earth” is the site of celebrations - birthdays, anniversaries, reunions, or any of life’s moments. (*Sounds like the Rose Garden, right?*) But this year Disney Parks is celebrating something new - the good things people do for their communities.

Disney has teamed up with the **HandsOn Network/Points of Light**, national volunteer organizations to promote this special opportunity.

It’s easy, but there are a few rules:

You **MUST PRE-REGISTER PRIOR TO THE EVENT** at www.DisneyParks.com

All volunteers must pre register and sign up for the opportunity **before** volunteering. Please note, a volunteer can sign up the day of the event as long as they registered themselves online before arriving, but **not after the event.**

Ticket quantities are limited. However when a volunteer registers online at www.DisneyParks.com and commits to event, a voucher will be reserved. Disney will track all reserved and distributed vouchers. After the service is completed and verified, the voucher can be exchanged for ticket. The program is limited to one ticket per person, and open to volunteers age 6 and up. Members of the same address can sign up together, those who volunteer as a ‘family team’ limited to no more than 9 volunteers per group.

For more info including FAQ
www.DisneyParks.com



Print and put on refrigerator - Tell a Friend!

Rose Pruning & Demo Day

San Jose Municipal Rose Garden

Corner of Naglee & Dana Ave

Sat Jan 9th at 9:00 am

(Rain date 16th)

Learn from the Pro's - Our quick & easy pruning method

A Free Bare Root Rose

Given to volunteers who arrive by 9:00 am!!!

Courtesy of Star Roses!



And pre-register to participate in
Give a Day, Get a Disney Day

Help prune the Rose Garden and get
Free admission to Disneyland!!!

See the Pruning Training video
and details on Disneyland promotion
www.FriendsSJRoseGarden.org

Bring gloves, pruning shears or loppers!! Some provided

Sponsored by Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden and
City of San Jose Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services



Show ‘Em Way to Rose Garden

*You May Know the Way to San Jose, but
Do You Know the Way to the Rose Garden?*

Flipping through an old scrapbook, I discovered a clipping of a **San Jose Mercury Herald** editorial from Sep 30, 1933 “Show ‘Em Way to Rose Garden.” It said, “*San Jose, is overlooking a splendid opportunity . . . in not advertising our municipal rose garden.*” It was only by chance she drove by and visitors would “*enjoy the gorgeous display if only it were brought to their attention. Why doesn’t the city place markers along the highway pointing out the route to this beauty spot?*”

Intrigued and amused that 75 years later there still was no street sign for our historic landmark Rose Garden, I brought it up at some of our early FSJRG planning meetings with then Parks Manager Mike Will, who agreed street signs were a good idea. That was almost a year ago, and we’re pleased to say our partners at the City of San Jose have helped make this dream come true.

After months of reviewing and fine-tuning designs, we are on our way for visitors to easily find their way to the Rose Garden with **beautiful new signs**. Designed by **Terry Reilly** with input from Creative Analyst **Maria Pavlick-Larsen**, the 24” x 24’ signs are colorful, easy to read and eye-catching.



There will be approximately 8 different locations in the general Rose Garden vicinity, the first location is expected to be installed on December 14 at the corner of Hedding and Dana.



New street signs rolling off printing press at SignWorks

This project, like virtually everything at the Rose Garden, was only made possible because of the wonderful partnership of volunteers and city staff. Your comments and votes on potential designs provided valuable input, and donations to pay for the printing made it possible.

Thank you to our partners at the City of San Jose, including Councilmember Pierluigi Oliverio, Department of Transportation Manager Hans Larsen, Mike Will, Parks Manager Brian Hartsell, and Supervisor Jeff Gomez.

Thank you to David Rodgers at **SignWorks** for professional advice and top quality production.

Congratulations Terry on coming up with a winning design! And thanks again to all who donated to the street sign campaign and pointing the way to our beautiful Rose Garden.

- BRH

*“The Rose Garden is now the soul
of the City of San Jose”*

Shiv Medheratta



Update on AARS Test Beds

The first season of judging the future **All-America Rose Selections** winner(s) is over. 38 roses were in the 2009 trials at the San Jose Rose Garden and carefully evaluated on 15 attributes. – including disease resistance, novelty, form, color, aging quality, fragrance, habit, vigor, foliage and repeat bloom. As discussed in previous newsletters, **the AARS testing program is a two-year process.** The roses planted in 2009 as part of the trials will remain in place for 2010 for the second year evaluations.

So where does the class of 2010 go? New beds will be dug next to the existing AARS Test Beds. Below is a plan, with the new beds marked in blue. The area marked “Kiosk” is the proposed location of a future addition – an **Interpretative Panel** (*fancy name for sign*) which will feature information on the AARS Test Beds. The goal is to have the AARS Test Bed area set up in a clearly defined



42 roses in 2008
38 in 2009
? in 2010
? in 2011

This layout would allow 54 - 92 varieties total.

area for visitors. Being an AARS Test Garden is very special, our Rose Garden is one of **only 23 in USA and the only one in Northern California.** FSJRG has been working with the City of San Jose including the **Convention & Visitor's Bureau** in

order to promote the special status of our garden, which is a win-win situation for all.

Special thank you to City of San Jose Parks Manager Brian Hartsell, Acting Maintenance Supervisor Jeff Gomez, and Gardener Lance Loveday for their vision, enthusiasm and support. *We couldn't do it without you!*



Simple Steps to Plant Roses

1. **SELECT A GOOD ROSE** - long roots, sturdy canes.
2. **SOAK OVERNIGHT** - in water; optional add bit Vitamin B1.
3. **DIG BIG ENOUGH HOLE** - for roots plus expansion.
4. **AMEND SOIL** - with organics or use planting mix or **Super Soil**. Throw in a handful of Super-Phosphate to aid root development.
5. **MOUND** - cover newly planted rose with wet compost until 2 inches new growth to prevent canes from drying out.

When it comes to planting roses, I've dug **big holes, small holes** and once I even grew a rose in **no hole.** (*I tossed it aside and the darn thing grew on top of the ground.*)

*"I have simple formula.
Size of roots + my energy = size of hole"*

- BRH

Planting Bare Root Roses

By Dorothy Wall, Consulting Rosarian

Bare-root roses are the choice of experienced rose growers. But for the uninitiated it can be a shock to receive a box of bare root roses. They will be tied up with twine and crammed together in a big bundle, showing no resemblance at all to the pictures portrayed so vividly in your mind. It would seem to take a miracle to transform such a mass into blooming plants. But never fear, gardeners are by their nature, believers in miracles. Here's a review of the basics to make the miracle a reality.

Inspect each plant carefully for damaged or broken roots and trim if necessary. If some are very long, it's ok to trim to more manageable size.

Submerge in water (yes the whole plant). They've had a long, hard journey from field to your door. It may have been weeks since they were yanked so rudely out of the ground, lopped off, kept in cold storage, packed and shipped – they need a good drink. I use a clean trashcan filled with water along with a little bleach and soak the roses for 24 hours.

Choosing the best location. Roses like sun and plenty of it, at least 6 hours daily. Avoid planting near large trees, as they will compete with the rose for food and water.

The almighty hole. Someone once said "Don't put a dollar plant in a dime hole." This obviously was said a long time ago because the numbers have changed, but the philosophy is the same. Don't spare the shovel; extra time and energy will pay off. Give the roots room to expand. I like wider rather than deeper because the feeder roots, the real workers, will spread out a two-foot radius. Twice as wide and deep as the roots is a good guide.

Check for drainage. Fill the hole with water and let it stand. If the water has not drained out in an hour, better improve the drainage. Roses do not like wet feet. A cup of gypsum sprinkled in the hole will work wonders. Or dig deeper and put coarse sand or gravel in the bottom.

Amend the soil. Use lots of organic material and mix it in with the existing soil. Otherwise the roots

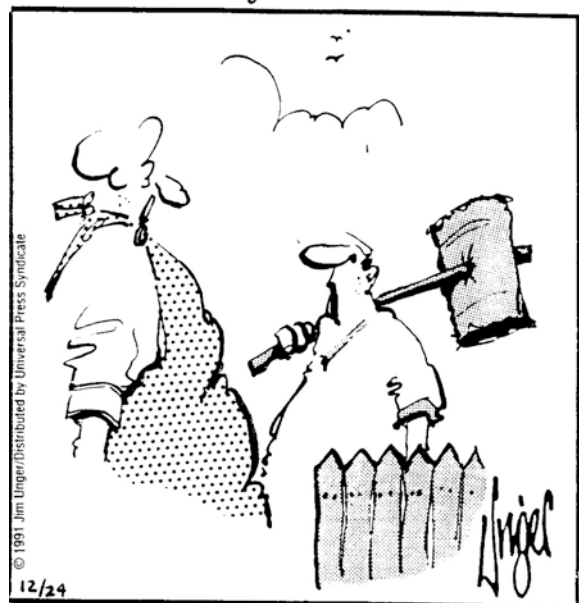
will be reluctant to leave the confines of the soil instead of adjusting to the garden soil.

Make a cone in the hole with the amended soil and place the roots firmly and evenly around it. Sprinkle some super-phosphate (encourages root development) around near the bottom of the roots. As you replace the soil, check for right depth of the plant. The crown or bud-union should be just above ground level. Tamp the soil in firmly but gently (don't use your feet) to avoid air pockets. When the soil is about $\frac{3}{4}$ filled add water to settle the soil around the roots, and when drained add the remaining soil and water again.

Mounding is the most important step in planting a bare-root rose. It may look a little silly to see all these mounds like so many anthills, but it works! Any of the materials you used as amendments are ideal. Heap the plant, covering at least half or more. Water it again and leave it alone until you see new growth. When an inch or so of new growth emerges it's time to un-mound. Do it carefully by hand or a gentle spray of water.

Container planting may be the best choice if your roses are going to be put into an established bed. The competition may be too much for a brand new rose. Giving the plant a few months of growing in a container where it can develop a strong root system will enable it to compete with the "big boys." Another plus of starting a new rose in a container is that it provides an opportunity to evaluate it before you give it space in the landscape.

Herman □ James Unger



'Where do you want your rosebushes planted?'

Gifts for the Gardener – Tis the Season (Pruning)

If Santa doesn't stuff your stocking with these, then treat yourself to a new pair of **Felcos**. Quite possibly the best **pruning shear** - I also love the **Felco loppers** and **folding pruning saw** - they are the favorite of most rose fanciers. Sure they are a little more expensive but definitely worth it. Felco pruning shears come in many models; my personal fav is model #8 with ergonomic design or even #6 designed for smaller hands, but you can't go wrong with the #2 - considered classic. Sturdy, long lasting, they get the job done. I've pruned thousands of roses and would not want to be without my Felcos.



Though my personal favorite pruning shears are Felcos, my Mom swears by her new pair of **Barnel Pruners**. Between arthritis and a broken wrist, she found it difficult to keep up with the constant clipping required by any good garden. Pruning would leave her, well . . . prematurely pooped. Then she discovered Barnel Pruners which made such chores fun again. The lightweight yet sturdy design was easier on her hands and wrist, enabling her to spend more time in the garden (*and less time taking Motrin!*)



If making the big cuts is a big problem for you, then a **battery operated cutsaw** may provide the power

boost you need. **Black & Decker's VPX** is a light-weight, 7 volt battery operated power saw - so no cord to get tangled among the canes. It may be just the thing you need to zip through pruning season.



When it comes to gloves, I wear **gauntlets** or wear nothing. Putting on a pair tells the roses you mean business. The long cuffs protect the wrists and forearms - prickles don't send a shiver up your spine or leave a trail of blood. I've tried many different gloves and keep coming back to **"The Gauntlet"** which has served me well. Terry's favorite is **"The Rose Glove" by West County Gardener** - colorful and machine washable. Another model you may want to try is **"The Bionic Glove"** which looks rather James Bond-ish. Designed by a hand orthopedic surgeon, it offers a combination of protection and support - handy for long days in the garden.

Diamonds are a gardeners best friend, at least when it comes to keeping pruning shears sharp. **Diamond Whetstone Sharpeners** stones or files come in a variety of sizes – compact or folding files easily fit into a pocket or garden bag – and can be used without messy oils or water. Clean blades made clean cuts, and that's easier on the plant and you. Perfect stocking stuffer.

Soils: Dead or Alive?

By Beverly Rose Hopper, Master Rosarian
An American Rose Society Award of Merit article

Do you have dead dirt or soil that is alive? Even if you don't know the answer to this question, undoubtedly your roses do. Anybody can dig a hole, stick a rose in the ground and figure it will grow or not. Sort of a "survival of the fittest" mentality. And for some, it works. My philosophy is just the opposite – if a rose is OK without much care, just think how great it would be if properly looked after! And to look after your roses properly, it is important to consider what kind of a home you are giving them – and that means looking after the soil.

Does your soil have soul?

Years ago I was asked what was the difference between "dirt and soil" and my response was "dirt was free and soil costs money." That of course was a flip answer. Though purists would declare that "dirt" is a dirty word, that the correct term for all dirt is soil, I tend to think of dirt being what we find in the garden plain and unadorned, and soil is what we get when we dig in it, add to it, and work it to create a garden. In the wild, plant and animal material decompose into the soil as humus, creating rich earth for new plants to grow. In urban gardens it's up to the gardener to help provide what Mother Nature cannot; to supplement the soil with amendments such as compost and manures to help create a living earth in which microorganisms and plants can thrive.

What is good soil?

Articles by and for the scientific set delve into detailed descriptions of soil featuring the periodic table of elements but that is not the scope here. Let's keep it simple, and simply put, the structure of soil is made up of four components – inorganic minerals, organic matter, water and air. Good soil has a friable texture that is somewhat crumbly in the hand, and is referred to as sandy loam. In much of California, our native soils are heavily clay, even adobe (think of all those missions built with adobe brick!) so the concept of "sandy loam" may seem a bit daunting and may tempt you to run to the hardware store for bags of sand to achieve the idea. A word of advice – Don't! Even though adding sand

to clay soils will not really result in cement, it is much better to add organics that will improve texture, drainage, and nutrients.

Now according to the American Rose Society *Consulting Rosarian Manual*, "A Consulting Rosarian should never recommend treatment of another person's rose bed without first recommending a complete soil test." *Puhlezze!* Let's be realistic, John Q. Public is not going to spend several hundred dollars on a soil test just to grow a few roses. However if they are interested I can tell them the Soil and Plant Lab will do a jolly job. Personally, I've been growing roses for almost thirty years and though I used to employ a pH meter and other gizmos, now rather than reading test strips I simply "read my roses." Do they look happy? Roses grow best in soil that is slightly acidic, 6 to 6.5 being considered ideal for roses. Some variation is fine, but if you give your roses a sensible diet of balanced fertilizers you lessen the risk of throwing the soil out of balance.

Healthy soil makes happy roses.

The best soil amendments not only feed the roses but also feed the soil and improve soil texture. After the roses have been pruned but before new growth has started (February) is an excellent time to add soil amendments. Because the roses are cut back there is more maneuverability in the garden and less chance to knock off fragile new growth. Be generous with organics. My favorites to add each year are manure, alfalfa pellets, Dr. Earth or Mills Magic Mix, topped off with a thick layer of redwood compost which doubles as mulch. Do be careful not to tramp all over the rose bed after a rain when the ground may still be soggy, to avoid undue compaction of the soil. Compressing the soil squeezes out oxygen, which is needed for microbial action and can cause drainage problems. Also keep in mind the yearly adding of amendments though beneficial can alter not only the soil texture and composition, but also the soil level. A few years ago we replaced our fence to discover our yard was 5 inches higher than the neighbors! A friend of mine, Dan Bifano who is a consultant for many celebrities rose gardens (including Oprah and Barbra Streisand) advocates removing a layer of soil every year to keep the ground level before adding fresh amendments to avoid uneven levels.

Finally remember that **soil is a living thing.**



Participate – Appreciate – Donate

We started this issue of the newsletter talking about what a “gift” your gift of volunteerism is. What’s been achieved is not because the efforts of one or two or a handful, but the **shear power** of countless volunteers partnered with dedicated city staff. It is a true private/public partnership: so successful it is now serving as a model in other communities.

Last Christmas the *San Jose Mercury News* December 25 editorial said Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden was the “Best Gift of 2008.” Such an accolade recognized the importance and value of the Rose Garden, and the value and importance of all who have given back to the community.

2009 was even better. The Rose Garden responded by bestowing a year full of beautiful blooms to delight the senses - spectacular, constant bloom from March through November. As my Mother said “It’s as though the Rose Garden was just waiting to be loved.”

The San Jose Municipal Rose Garden attracts visitors from across America and is the site of picnics and celebrations, a peaceful oasis in a hectic world. In these economic times, the importance of parks cannot be understated. Parks serve all the people – providing a place of beauty to lift the spirit and renew the soul.

Thank you for being part of the Best Gift!

Beverly Rose Hopper & Terry Reilly
Co-Founders, Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden

We are a 501c3 non-profit all volunteer group. Your donations are tax deductible, and helps fund our on-going effort to keep the Rose Garden in tip-top shape.

Sponsorship Levels

Up to \$50	Rose Garden Bud
Up to \$100	Rose Garden Bloom
Up to \$1000	Rose Garden Bouquet
\$1000 & up	Rose Garden Patron

Donate online

www.FriendsSJRoseGarden.org

or send a check to:

**Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden
1375 Emory Street
San Jose, CA 95126**

