

Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden

"America's Best Rose Garden"

Issue 36

July 2017

Good News, Bad News, Good News

Over the years, the Garden has had its ups and downs. In 2007, when the Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden (FSJRG) was formed, the garden was a mess, with dead and dying roses everywhere, and weeds growing higher than the roses - those that were still alive. The Garden came back with a group effort of former Councilmember Pierluigi Oliverio, the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS), and the volunteers of the FSJRG. This began the effort to bring in a proper staffing model for the Garden. At the request of former Councilmember Oliverio, the city upped the staffing and budgeted two full time workers, and one part time worker. With this, and the addition of the volunteers, we are able to bring the Garden to national prominence, winning "America's Best Rose Garden".

The Garden survived the budget cuts that came soon after, but now have just one full time city worker. It is taking a severe toll on the Garden and the volunteers. As 2017 began, it was clear that the Garden did not have the city support that what Trip Advisor's web site promotes as "The #1 Thing To Do in San Jose" deserved.

So here was the Good News: Councilmember Dev Davis asked Mayor Liccardo during the 2017-2018 budgeting process for additional staffing at the Rose Garden, bringing it back in line with when the Garden won "America's Best Rose Garden". We believed this had a good chance of being accepted as the Mayor had

declared it was "the greatest Rose Garden not in the Nation, not on the planet, but the entire Universe" during his appearance at the May 7th Stroke Walk. In addition Councilmember Davis presented a compelling case to increase the staffing to anyone who would listen.

The Bad News: Even with intense lobbying by Councilmember Davis to Mayor Liccardo, and Angel Rios - Director of PRNS, the Mayor rejected Councilmember Davis' request to bring the staffing back to previous levels. In the Mayor's defense, he did not accept any budget request that required on-going, year-to-year funding. This was quite a disappointment as we were looking for the increased staffing to take care of the many issues that are out of the volunteers control - the weeds, irrigation, mowing, general maintenance.

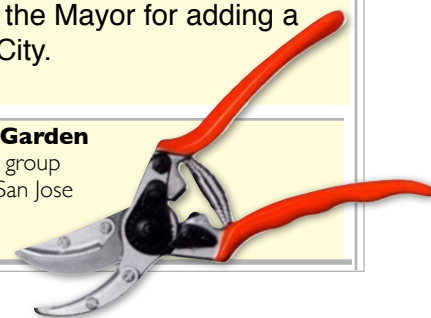
The Good News: The Mayor's budget did include increasing the permanent staffing levels in the city's Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, and Director Rios has earmarked one of those positions to be placed in the Rose Garden. In his words, this was required "given the special attention required by our rose collection."

The fiscal year began in July, and recruitment efforts are underway to fill the position. We appreciate Councilmember Davis' support, as well as Director Rios' recognition that additional staffing is warranted, and the Mayor for adding a few position to the entire City.



www.facebook.com/FriendsoftheSanJoseRoseGarden

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



Master Volunteers - The Backbone of the Garden

When we began the Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden in 2007, the City initially only agreed for us to organize 4 big community events a year, to have volunteers come out and spruce up the Garden.

Our ultimate goal was to have the city allow volunteers to come on their own time, any day, to help the Garden. After some negotiations, an agreement was formed with the city, and the Master Volunteer program began.

Master Volunteers are really the backbone to the success of the Garden. It began with a small group, many who are still active. Over the past 10 years we have trained over 300 Master Volunteers. Some have put in a few hours, others quite a bit, some have moved on to other things, and some logs hours every week. As my Mother taught me "Beggars can't be choosers" and we will train anyone that wants to be a Master Volunteer, with the hope that they will come back and find the time fulfilling.

Master Volunteers track their hours, and we have a program which shows the progress over time.

So what does it mean to be a Master Volunteer and what are the benefits? First, you attend a Master Volunteer Training which lasts about 1.5 hours. We review the methods which have been proven over time in the Rose Garden to be the best techniques for a public garden. After that, you need to put in 5 hours of individual time in the Garden in order to become VESTED. At this point, you get the official VEST, which you can get embroidered for free at Graphi-x-stich, a supporter of the FSJRG. You then can log in and track hours, and attend Pizza Work Parties, supported by Rosie's New York Pizza. Park Station Hashery, a big supporter of the Garden also has a special program for Master Volunteers - essentially after you volunteer at the Garden, you can have lunch for FREE (some conditions apply!).

We have been having Master Volunteer Trainings just about every two weeks throughout the season. If you are interested in taking the next step and becoming a Master Volunteer, there are two upcoming trainings. To register, please go to:
<http://friendssjrosegarden.org/training/>



One of the original trainings of Master Volunteers 2008



BECOME A ROSE GARDEN "MASTER VOLUNTEER"

Upcoming Training
Dates:

Sunday, July 30th - 8:32am
Tuesday, August 1st - 6:07pm

Friends of the
San Jose



Rose Garden



Be part of the Rose Garden's Success!
Learn rose care from the experts
and be an integral part of the Rose Garden's success!

To register - go to:

<http://friendssjrosegarden.org/training/>



Vandalized Sundial



Davis Johnson (PSH) presents new Sundial



New Sundial installed

Being a Good Neighbor

Being a good neighbor means taking care of others. And that's just the type of neighbor the Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden has in Park Station Hashery.

Let me explain: a unique sundial has been an integral part of the Rose Garden since its opening in 1937, 80 years ago. A couple months ago, the current sundial was vandalized.

I posted news of the vandalism on the social media platform known as NextDoor, and within hours received an email from the owners of PARK STATION HASHERY to let me know they will do whatever is needed to replace the vandalized sundial and wanted info on the manufacturer, etc.

And just like that, I had in my hand a replacement sundial, of the EXACT SAME

DESIGN, ready for installation! They even arranged for installation!

The new sundial is now installed, and they purchased a second sundial just in case any miscreants vandalize it and we need to replace it again!



I must say, I was quite impressed with the rapid action of PSH to come to the rescue of the Rose Garden. So if you have a chance to stop by and have a meal, or come by for happy hour, please let them know you appreciate their support of the Rose Garden!

Fun Fact: you will usually find me there on Tuesday nights,

because of TWO WHEEL TUESDAY! What's that you ask? If you ride your bike to Park Station Hashery, your second draft beer is one-the-house!

Big Turnout for Mother's Day

Our volunteer day May 6th was well appreciated by the hundreds of visitors on Mother's Day. The Garden was packed the whole weekend and the Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden had set up a tent to provide tours and answer questions for the many visitors.

We met visitors from India, Germany, Russia, Mexico, England, Poland, and even Milpitas! We offered several different options for the visitors: a fragrance tour, where we highlighted the most fragrant beds, a roses of the future tour, where we reviewed the test roses and pre-release, and a classics tours, where we showed some of the most popular beds of well known roses like Peace, Mr. Lincoln, Queen Elizabeth, Julia Child etc.

It was great to see so many generations of families standing in front of beds, taking pictures that will surely be keepsakes for years. Thanks to all the volunteers that worked hard to make the Garden memorable to all visitors!



Weeds, Weeds, Weeds

Last year, when the weeds started getting out of control, we approached the City to see what they were going to do about them. In our agreement with the City, the volunteers of the Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden can take care of the roses, but the City needs to take care of the rest - which includes weeds, mowing, edging, irrigation, fountain, and general Garden maintenance.

But they couldn't keep up. In an effort to help, the FSJRG developed a crew of dedicated volunteers called the "Weed Wackers". They would get a special patch and an email account to communicate the weeding progress of rose beds, such that the City could then put down pre-emergent, sheet cardboard, and mulch to reduce the weeds. The City has also worked to bring in the Conservation Corps to help pull weeds, as well as organizing company work parties.



It has been a group effort, but we are still faced with the proliferation of weeds in the beds, which destroys the beauty of the Garden. We are encouraging the City to gain control of the weeds and appreciate their efforts so far, but it is a constant struggle which must be dealt with. We hope a solution comes soon.

The Importance of Compost

In 2008, the FSJRG suggested to the city and asked them to allow the application of compost to the rose beds, to help invigorate the soil and reduce the weeds. The original agreement from PRNS upper management was to do the whole Garden. But the City Gardener at the time did not approve, so we just did a small section of the Garden to prove out the concept. Of course the results showed great improvement and we were then allowed to organize a wholesale composting of the Garden. In addition, we experimented with weed cloth, to see its effect. The Kiwanis were enlisted and we had a big day putting the weed cloth out and compost on top. This proved to be effective, but over time, the weed cloth got damaged by "over aggressive" hoeing, which tore up the weed cloth. In the end, the weed cloth was pulled up and we considered other methods of barriers.

In the interim, volunteers and organized groups spread out compost provided by the city. But there was a problem which plagues us now. The compost provided to the Garden for the past few years was contaminated with weed seeds which no grow in the Garden.

In order to rectify this, we have had "clean" compost delivered directly to the Garden, rather than a City staging site, and covered with tarps, such that no weed seeds can contaminate the pile. In addition, we have, and the FSJRG and city has spent, about \$1,500 on "sheet cardboard", which can be laid down before the mulch is applied. Our active Master Volunteers that have joined the "WEED WACKER" program reports that while the cardboard sheets and compost does not eliminate the weeds, it greatly reduces the quick return, and allows for quick eradication.



A Decision is Made

In 2016, we put in a bed of an unnamed rose variety that would be introduced in 2018 with the ability for visitors to “name this rose”.

Over 250 entries have been submitted. Some suggested they name it after a sweetheart they were with at the time, others suggested name based upon the characteristic of the rose. With each entry, we asked “why do you suggest this name?”, and I must say, the reasons were quite heart-felt.

In the end, Weeks Roses, who will introduce the rose, chose Parade Day, “for the movement and the joy created by the stripes”.

As you can see, it is quite a stunning rose which grows vigorously. So if you want this rose in your garden, look for Parade Day next year!



Parade Day - to be introduced in 2018

What do Rose Like in the Summer?

WATER! Often, people neglect to adjust the watering schedule of their roses during the season. In the Summer months, water evaporates, and roses can quickly become stressed and show the effect of the heat. A bloom that looked fantastic one day, and in prime form, can be totally wilted and unrecoverable the next day if the roses do not have ample hydration.

This is a constant struggle in a Garden with 4,000 roses. This year, because of the funding in 2016 provided by former Councilmember Pierluigi Oliverio, the irrigation system is being upgraded to allow internet access and adjustment of the watering zones. We are hopeful this will help to alleviate the summer doldrums the Garden has during the hot months. Adjusting watering schedules will be easy, and available from a iPhone interface for city staff.



a week.
Look at your roses at the end of the day. See if the blooms look tired or refreshed. If they look a little droopy, they probably need some water. Give them a nice soak. Check them the next day. I suspect they will look a lot more “perky”!