



**Page One. The News:**

- The names of the Bronze Medal recipients will be printed in the March/April 2008 edition of the *American Rose*. The deadline for reporting the names to Peggy Spivey ([peggy@ars-hq.org](mailto:peggy@ars-hq.org)) is January 2, 2008.
- The deadline for participating in the 82<sup>nd</sup> annual Roses in Review is September 26<sup>th</sup>. All members of local rose societies, members of the ARS or not, are urged to record their opinions about roses currently in their 2<sup>nd</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> year in commerce. Especially important are the opinions regarding the garden value of these roses as well as their exhibiting potential. Currently, there are more reports from the NCNH district than any other. Simply go to the ARS website ([www.ars.org](http://www.ars.org)) and click on the icon for R.I.R.
- As a follow-up to the activities of the Southampton Rose Society mentioned in ARS & You no 5, the SRS dedicated a life-sized bronze sculpture in the SRS Rose Garden at the Rogers Memorial Library on August 30, 2007.
- **Attention: Members living along the middle and Southeastern Seaboard:** SunTrust Bank has an offer that can benefit the American Rose Society or a local rose society. Each household that opens a SunTrust checking account between August 6<sup>th</sup> and October 12<sup>th</sup> can have \$100 donated to a charitable organization. Basically, the offer requires the individual to open an account, accept a debit card and use it, and to fill out a redemption form before November 15<sup>th</sup>. The details are available at [www.suntrust.com/mycause](http://www.suntrust.com/mycause).

**Page Two: Views: Firescaping:** Large scale changes in the climate have brought drought conditions to areas unfamiliar with the phenomenon. Bert & Kay Grant are the PSW District CR Chairs.

**Firescaping: How to incorporate Roses into a 'Fire Safe' landscape.**

By Bert & Kay Grant

In learning the principles of 'firescaping,' you can also learn how to use roses in a manner which is both attractive and beneficial at the same time. This history of climatology shows us climates are cyclic. With the advent of the industrial age, the change in climates occurs faster than ever before. Since the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, areas which were once green because of an abundance of annual rainfall have become arid. Some arid climates are even drier while others are experiencing unprecedented rainfall. Some of these climate changes foster the destructive forces of fire.

Some states and communities have instituted laws to help minimize fire destruction. In Oregon if you live in an area designated as fire prone, a landowner must clean up his or her property, removing brushy undergrowth and thinning tree canopies to receive a free certification of a fire safe landscape. Without such a certification a landowner is liable for up to \$100,000 for firefighting costs in the event that a fire takes place.

## **How do you ‘Firescape’ your property and still grow roses?**

‘Firescaping’ is not hard. When possible, you need to provide a defensible space of at least 100 feet from the outermost buildings on your property. Even more space is better. You do not have to give up your roses and scalp the ground down to dirt. In areas approximately 30 to 40 feet away from buildings, plant cultivars that do not attain a height greater than a foot and a half. Do not plant vegetation right against buildings. The rule is simple: the taller the growth habit of a plant, the more likely it will provide a path for the fire to get to the building. Such a path is referred to as ‘ladder material.’

Taller Hybrid Tea and shrubs should be sited in a bed surrounded by materials such as rocks, or concrete and away from buildings. Since roses do not like shade, there is even more of an incentive to plant them in full sun. The rose beds thus do not become ‘ladder material’ for a grass fire to become a tree fire. The distinction between a grass fire and tree fire is important. Grass fires tend to burn cooler and are less destructive than tree fires which jump from tree to tree and house to house. Climbing roses can be placed on ‘tee-pee’ trellises in a yard rather than against a building or fence. While there is no denying the beauty of a climbing rose blooming in a tree, that beauty is a danger in fire prone areas by providing deadly ‘ladder material.’

As people move deeper and deeper into forests and grasslands, fire danger increases with the probability of devastating fire damage. People must take measures to protect their properties and foresee the potential consequences of not doing so.

If you are interested in learning more on the subject there is an excellent paperback called: **‘Firescaping: Creating fire-resistant Landscapes, Gardens, and Properties in California’s Diverse Environments’** by Douglas Kent. Although the book is tailored to California locales, the information and principles are applicable to every state. You can also get in touch with your state Department of Forestry or Department of Natural Resources or State Fire Safety Council. These departments generally have materials which provide recommendations and explain any laws concerning required defensible spaces in your locale.

The choice is simple. Firescape now or regret later.

**Page Three: Re-views:** Attracting and retaining a diverse membership requires re-thinking some society practices. Dr. Karen Barnes, a LSRC committee member and award-winning author, looks at this opportunity. See the White Book, pages 64ff.

### **Family-Friendly Rose Societies**

By Dr. Karen Barnes

Attracting and keeping new and enthusiastic members are the lifeblood of any organization. It seems a logical extension to believe that if we can recruit new dedicated members to our local clubs, we can encourage those folks to join the American Rose Society. Working folks and those with children may be the best-untapped member resource of all. They have energy, enthusiasm, and new ways of thinking and doing things to liven up a local society. As an employed parent of a pre-teen, I offer some thoughts for making a society more family-friendly.

### **Hobby Time is Precious!**

Some members may be balancing a career, children, or caring for aging parents in addition to wondering why their rose bush no longer looks so hot. Make it worth their time to come to a meeting by tailoring some meetings to their concerns.

- Consider hosting a ‘Question & Answers Session’ as a program.
- Have a ‘The Doctor is In’ table and encourage members to bring their damaged leaves, unknown bugs, or questions to a rotating panel of Consulting Rosarians.

- Give sensible and do-able advice. Find out their goal for THEIR garden and help achieve it.

### **Make sure the Meetings are Meeting their Needs!**

Not everyone wants the same thing from a rose garden or a rose meeting. And families have different concepts of time.

- Make new members welcome to ensure that they return. Say hello and invite them to come back next month. Send a follow-up letter or 'How to' brochure written for new attendees. For both youthful and seasoned parents, a rose meeting might be the social event of someone's month.
- Members may be paying for childcare while they are at a meeting. Keep the meetings on schedule and respect their time. Consider a social event *after* a meeting so that the members can network but aren't forced to stay if they have to rush home to spring the baby sitter.
- Often members have rushed to pick up the kids from day care, stuffed chicken nuggets into their cherubs and driven quite a distance to be at a meeting. Give them some decompression time with a few announcements first. I have essentially given up attending rose meetings at a club I really love because I work a full day, pick up my daughter, and then drive over an hour to the meeting only to rush straight into the main presentation. It is too much stress to fight rush hour traffic only to land in the middle of a presentation. Roses are my hobby, not a second day at work.

### **Make the rose society kid friendly!**

Consider having a class for children at your rose show. If the munchkins are happy, the parents may keep coming back. My daughter and I have been showing as a team since she won her first Novice award at 6 years old. She loves helping me in the garden and absolutely adores showing! I'll never forget the show here my then 9-year old entered our only gorgeous 'Miss Flippins' in the Junior Mini/Miniflora class and a stunning 'Veterans' Honor' in the Junior HT class. She won both of her classes. My daughter was very proud of the rose embellished piggy bank and watering can and still proudly displays these trophies in her room. *(I was chided by a veteran exhibitor for breaking up my own entry into the Big/Little class featuring Waterford so that my daughter could make her entries. But the admonishment missed the point. As an exhibitor I may have missed out on Waterford, but as a parent, I was overjoyed for my daughter.)*

### **Odds and Ends!**

- Weekday morning meetings are not family friendly for members with children or careers. Consider weekend meetings. Be friendly to seniors by avoiding meetings which require them to go out alone in the dark.
- Break up cliques. Nothing is more demoralizing to members than being kept out of the inner circle. Be considerate of membership with limited time by asking them to do limited tasks without an open ended time commitment.
- The rose hobby is a beautiful obsession that transcends age, gender, and socio-economic status. Our local societies should reflect that diversity.
- Welcome families to rose society meetings with actions as well as words.

The members of the Local Society Relations Committee are listed on the ARS website ([www.ars.org](http://www.ars.org)) and welcome comments on the materials appearing in the ARS & You as well as suggestions for future articles.