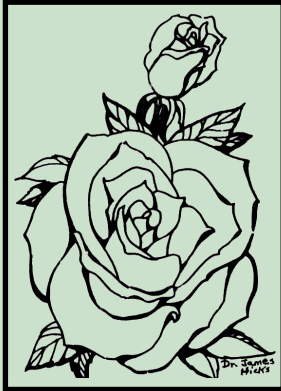


Rosebuds

www.bowlinggreenrosesociety.org

A Publication of the Bowling Green Rose Society



Important Dates

Next Meeting
March 14 at 2 pm
Clearfork Baptist
Church
Rockfield, KY

BGRS Rose Show
May 22



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Member of the
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of the
American Rose Society

www.tenarky.org

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www.rose.org

Ten Principles of Rose Pruning by Bob Martin, ARS President

Editor's Note: As we heard ARS President Bob Martin speak at our last meeting, I wanted to share this article he wrote about planting and pruning roses. Of course, he is in California, but the principles still apply to us in Kentucky.

Pruning time normally sends rose growers back to their books and out to pruning demonstrations and lectures to refresh their memories on the principles of pruning. There they will encounter numerous instructions on proper pruning technique, some of which are contradictory, and much of which scares them into thinking that if they don't do it exactly right, something terrible will happen to their roses. Don't believe it. You can't screw up the pruning of a rose. (Actually you can, but this would require you to cut under the bud union, which is something I have actually seen done, so let us just say that it is very hard to screw up the pruning of a rose.)

In an effort to bring some order to this confusion I once developed ten simple principles that provided



Dona's English Garden

guidance on pruning large roses – hybrid teas and grandifloras. I no longer believe two of them – or maybe it's because I've gotten older and more economical – so now there's eight. These I describe below. And, with minor modifications, mentioned at the close, these eight principles also apply to pruning floribundas, shrubs, miniature and miniflora roses. Climbers require a somewhat different approach that I will also describe at the end.

As with any project, the place to start is with a plan. Thus the first rule is:

1. Plan Your Pruning From the Ground Up.

Most rose growers start the pruning process from

the top, standing over their roses and nibbling away with pruning shears as if they were barbers giving their roses a trim. This wastes time; it is also ineffective. The purpose of pruning is to select the strong, healthy canes that will support this year's growth. The stuff at the top is last year's history. Get down on your knees (sit down if it's more comfortable) and look at the bud union and the canes that come from it. Think about new growth and turn to rule number 2:

2. If It's Too Old To Cut It, Cut It.

Identify the newest canes. They are the ones that are the (cont. p 3)



President's Corner *by Dan Wernigk, CR*

"Some people are always grumbling because roses have thorns. I am thankful that thorns have roses."

—Howard Walters
from his November 1970 column
in the "American Rose" magazine

Well, I think we had a good meeting in February. I appreciate all who came to the meeting, and I hope we can have another good meeting March 14 at Clear Fork since we can't meet at the extension office yet. If anybody has any suggestions, I would appreciate your input.

Our March program will be "Pruning and Fertilizing" presented by Ricky and Bob. Linda and Cynthia will provide light refreshments.

See you there, Dan



DUES REMINDER!

2021 dues are past due!

If you have not paid your dues yet, please send your 2021 dues to our treasurer ASAP. so you will be included in the BGRS Yearbook and on the list sent to the ARS.

Linda Ford
413 Mary Mack Lane
Russellville, KY 42276

Nashville Rose Society Vendor Day

If you are ordering any roses or rose supplies from NRS, be sure to have your order forms sent by March 13 to pick up on March 29.



March in My Rose Garden *by Mary Ann Hext, MR*

With the warmer weather after the week of snow, ice, and freezing temperatures in February, I was starting to see signs of spring at our little farm. Then came the rains! We had huge ponds in our pastures, and the underground creek flooded the highest it has in the 20 years we have lived here. I removed a few of the insulation boards from around my raised hybrid tea bed so the mulch can dry out. Last year, I didn't do that when we had the heavy rains and some of their canes rotted to the graft. So far I have observed no major winter damage; and I have continued to check diligently for aphids and spider mites on the pots in the garage which I have sprayed monthly since November. I sprayed lime sulfur on the bushes and ground February 25 hoping it will help kill any remaining blackspot on the leaves on the bushes and those on top of the mulch. Very few leaves have fallen from my hybrid teas and this may be due to the heavier mulching and insulation around the bed that I did this year. However, the shrubs, which had no mulch around them are also putting out new growth.

Some of the things I am doing now and planning to do in March are:

1. Order new roses and supplies: fertilizer, fungicide, a new wand and nozzle to spray for spider mites (the one that Bob Martin recommended). Be sure to write the date on the chemicals when you open them.
2. Check the pH again in all beds and pots and adjusting as needed.
3. Clean the beds of any tree and rose leaves and other debris, then spray more lime sulfur on the ground.
4. Begin pruning when the forsythia blooms and those that I want to have blooms for the rose show, on the correct number of days which will be the last week of March and first week of April except for the minis and apply the first application of Mills Rose Mix along with a handful of Epson salts.
5. Start my regular spray program when the bushes leaf out.
6. Wait for warmer weather to start getting rid of weeds and limbs in my rose garden and yard. I plan to paint Roundup on the horrible henbit, chickweed, nettle, bittercress, and other weeds that are already growing around my rose beds and use my new handy dandy weed puller to remove the weeds in the beds.
7. Read the schedule and start making plans to exhibit at the BGRS rose show on May 22.
8. Read the latest issue of "American Rose".



Ten Principles of Rose Pruning (*continued from p. 1*)

greenest. Then identify any older canes. (If your bush is young--say two to three years old--you may not have much in (*cont. p. 3*) the way of older canes.) Like people, they are the ones that are craggy and gray. This is not the time for nostalgia. The old gray ones usually have weak spindly growth

on them and are in the way or brand new canes that are now only a gleam in the bud union's dormant eyes. Use your loppers or handy pruning saw and cut the old buzzards off flush with the bud union. When this is accomplished, turn to rule number 3:

3. If It's In the Way, Cut It Away.

New growth needs room and the ideal plant grows out from the center. Identify any canes that cross directly over the center and cut them off with your loppers or pruning saw flush with the bud union or, as is more generally the case, flush with the cane from which they have decided to grow in the wrong direction. Also, identify any canes that are seriously crowding each other. If they are not too close you can wedge them apart with a piece of stem cut from the plant. If not, cut them out with your loppers or pruning saw, again flush with the bud union or the cane from which they are growing. The remaining canes are now your bush and are ready to be pruned back – leading to the next rule:

4. The Height Is As Simple As 1-2-3.

The relative merits of severe versus light pruning are debated at length in the rose literature. Most proponents of severe pruning are



from areas that require winter protection for their roses. Since the cold is going to kill back long canes anyway this makes sense. The proponents of very light pruning are either too faint-hearted, or have an inordinate love of bushy foliage and small blooms on short stems. In our Southern California climate, neither approach makes sense. Mentally divide the cane into three equal parts and prepare to remove the top one-third. Before you do, however, proceed to rule number 5:

5. For All You Do, This Bud's For You.

If you are unusually lucky, exactly 2/3rds of the way up the cane (or 1/3rd down depending on whether you have now stood up) will be an outward facing bud eye. Bud eyes are found at the intersection of the cane and a leaflet of five. They will also develop from what looks like an expanded band on the cane. Sometimes they are obvious; other times less so. There should be several and the generally preferred ones face out. But it is not necessary to be slavish to the outside eye rule. Where the canes come out at a 45-degree or greater angle, a cut to the outside facing eye can often result in a horizontally

spreading bush with canes that fall of their own weight. This is particularly true of bushes that tend to naturally grow horizontally. A cut to an inner facing eye in such cases will usually produce a cane that goes straight up, the best way for roses to grow. What if there are no properly placed bud eyes?

Find one and work with what you've got. If you haven't got any, double check your eyesight and if there are really no eyes of promise conclude that God didn't intend the cane to live anyway. This brings us to a very important and seemingly heartless rule:

6. When In Doubt, Cut It Out.

Many rose growers are somewhat squeamish about pruning, for fear they will harm a plant that produces such beautiful and delicate blooms. Don't let the blooms fool you – a rose bush is one tough cookie. How else could the rose have survived without the loving care of rosarians for hundreds of millions of years? The bush will take care of itself, so if you're puzzling about whether to leave that little stem that, although unpromising, might do something – cut it off. This takes us to rule number 7:

7. If It Isn't Big Enough to Seal, It Doesn't Belong There.

Most instructional pieces on pruning advise you to seal cuts on stems larger than a pencil. Why, you may ask, should you consider leaving stems smaller than a pencil? A stem growing from another cane will never be larger than its source. Pencil-thick stems produce matchstick-thick stems that produce pin-thick stems (*cont. p. 4*)



Ten Principles of Rose Pruning (continued from p. 3)

that produce roses that only the thick-headed could love. Forget also the common instructions about sealing with shellac (who can find shellac anymore?) or nail polish or God forbid, the black, oily spray-on sealing goop that invariably gets sprayed on the bud eye, forever sealing it from growth. A drop of Elmer's or any white glue is fast and easy. Ignore those who claim you needn't seal in the winter because the cane borers are not active. This may be true where it's below freezing and the borers are all dead, but having personally lost more canes to borers than I care to disclose, I can guarantee you that if there is one borer in your neighborhood that is still alive, it'll drill a hole right into the end of your cane and deposit a creature that, if disregarded, will eat its way all the way to the bud union. Don't give the sucker an even break. And while we're talking about giving bugs a break, consider the next rule:

8. Leave No Leaves.

Strip all the remaining leaves. They too are last year's history. You want new leaves that can get a good start without catching fungus infections or facing attack from the bugs hanging around the old leaves. After this, your bush should be looking pretty bare and you can wrap up your work with a little advice that sounds like it came from Mom:

9. Don't Forget to Brush!

Take a wire brush and brush off that scaly woody stuff on the bud union. Try not to brush off any promising bud eyes while you're at it. Rose lore says this exercise will stimulate and provide room for basal breaks--new canes from the bud union. Whether this is really true has not exactly been proven, but it seems like a good idea and maybe the bush you just butchered will consider it a pat on the head and recognize that you still love it. But before you get too dreamy, you can turn to the last rule, which coincidentally also sounds like a word from Mom:

10. Clean Up After Yourself.

Gather up all the canes, stems, leaves and miscellaneous stuff you've generated, bag it up and throw it away. While you're at it, yank the weeds from around the bush and get rid of all the dead leaves and dried up old petals lying around. All of last year's fungus and insect problems are lying around in this stuff waiting for the new blooms. And don't bother to compost it. Rose canes don't decompose well and the spores, eggs and other things in the mess seem to survive composting efforts quite well. Finally, lay down some new mulch to make things look real neat. Your Mom will be proud of you and will love the roses that bloom in the spring, tra la.



ARS National Convention & Rose Show
September 10-14, 2021 - Milwaukee, WI

Set aside September 10-14, 2021, to attend the American Rose Society's National Convention and Rose Show in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

For more information and show schedules, visit www.creamcityroses.org, or the [Facebook page](#). Come to enjoy good rose fellowship, to learn from the best, and to enjoy this wonderful city.

Editor's Note: Make plans to attend this convention as our new district director, Lori Emery, will be installed at the banquet on Monday night. They are also planning rose garden tours that you will not want to miss!



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*Happy
Birthday!*

...with Roses!

Lynda Gibson—March 10

Potted Roses for Sale!

**BGRS Fundraiser
\$25 each**

**‘Article Blue’ - floribunda
‘Celestial Nights’ - floribunda**

**Please help sell these roses!
Reserve with Bob Jacobs**

2021 IMPORTANT DATES

- ♦ **May 22: BGRS Rose Show**
- ♦ **September TBA: Tenarky Fall District Convention & Rose Show (hosted by NRS at Belmont University)**
- ♦ **September 10-14: ARS 2021 National Convention and Rose Show, Milwaukee, WI**



ARS Trial Membership

A 4-month trial membership is available for \$10. You'll receive:

- ▶ Two issues of the American Rose, \$20 value.
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