

Membership Building

It has been asked “Why join a Rose Society when there is so much information available on the internet?” Our answer to that question has several answers.

Hands on experience: In person workshops on rose care and photography, as well as prepping roses and arrangements for shows, are just some of the in-person programs offered at *WJRS*.

Garden visits: *WJRS* offers the chance to visit not only our members’ gardens, as a group, but also public gardens often a discounted or free rates. We often carpool to these places.

Access to Consulting Rosarians: Our CR’s plan and present workshops, panel discussions and power points on everything from selection, planting, deadheading, winterizing, etc.

Discounts: *WJRS* has several nurseries in our area that offer discounts to the members with a current membership card.

Monthly Newsletter: *WJRS* emails, and in some cases, uses the US Postal Service, to send a newsletter 10 months a year. These newsletters include articles by consulting rosarians from all over the country, news of upcoming events for the society, district, and ARS. We also share our newsletter with other societies

Camaraderie: being able to get together with other people who share the same love of roses is priceless

PROGRAMS!!! *WJRS* has a program with a guest speaker or workshop at every monthly meeting

The West Jersey Rose Society has several ways that we use to build membership, some of those include:

- Social media – every event that we host we post on our website & Facebook page. We also advertise on local Neighbors, garden clubs & Mom’s Facebook pages.
- Rose Days – we set up information tables at the nursery’s that we have a partnership with. We will demonstrate pruning and promote rose products that the nursery carries. We remind the people that with their membership they can start saving at the nursery that day.
- At Local Farmer’s Markets, township-wide yard sales, our rose show, and other events, we set up an information table.
- Scholarships – *WJRS* gives a scholarship to a high school senior every year. By giving a scholarship we are building interest in our society with the families, and the community, which we hope will help to gain new members.
- Every society has that member, or members, who are good at talking to the public and energizing those they meet. So, other than having CRs at these public gatherings, we make sure we have those members in attendance to meet and greet the public at our information table.

Our information table consists of:

- Membership applications & sign about membership discount.
- List of advantages of membership, ex: access to our members only section of our website, discounts at local nurseries, 4-month trial membership to ARS,
- Garden partners list. There are several south jersey nurseries that offer a discount to members of our society with their current membership card.
- Copies of recent newsletters.
- Articles by consulting rosarians that are seasonally appropriate, ex: Spring pruning, summer care, preparing roses for winter, etc.
- Articles by consulting rosarians that cover diseases, pests, watering, pruning, best roses for the area, etc.
- Information about ARS trial membership applications
- Old ARS magazines
- Samples of rose care products: gloves, pruners, chemicals, etc. available at local nursery that offers discount to members. Sign stating name of nursery supplying samples and amount of discount available from that nursery.
- List of recommendations of resource books.
- David Austin and other rose suppliers' catalogs.
- Information on any upcoming events and/or speakers at WJRS meetings.

Additional ideas from the Kansas City Rose Society:

- Membership fees at Kansas City RS help build membership by allowing the different levels of membership draw in new members for one year. Lifetime members, \$1,000, can bring in 2 new members, free of charge, for 1 year. After one year, hopefully the new members will continue their membership. They can bring in 2 more new members every year. Patron members, \$250 can bring in 1 new member free of charge for 1 year. Again, hopefully that new member will convert into a paying member. The cost of membership at KCRS is \$40 a year.
- A Garden tour, by bus, to a formal garden offers the opportunity for the public to attend and hopefully join the society.
- Some of the benefits of membership with KCRS includes a Spring Tea and an Annual Luncheon where outgoing officers, and those who have gone over and above receive special recognition.

Summary:

We feel that Membership, Programing and Fundraising all go hand in hand.

At every event your society hosts, have a table set up with information about your society and rose care. Have your most enthusiastic members greeting the public.

Invite the public to attend your society's programs. *ARS is not a secret society!*

Utilize the list from ARS of the members that are in your area and do not belong to your society. Contact them and invite them to a meeting/program. Ask if they think they would benefit from a visit from a CR.

Most importantly, once you have new members, keep them by recognizing them for their work within the society!