

# Connecticut Horticultural Society

# NEWSLETTER

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## Tips for Keeping Cut Garden Roses Fresh

By Sally Ferguson, Ferguson Caras LLC, Pawlet Vermont

No cut roses are fresher than the ones you cut from your own garden. You grew them: that's part of their allure. Now, it's up to you to help them stay freshest, longest, as they make the trip from bush to the vase.

According to Michael Marriott, technical director of David Austin Roses of Albrighton, UK, there are several ways to lengthen the vase life of cut flowers, especially roses, beginning with how you cut them.

"For cutting single roses or clusters of blooms, choose better-quality garden scissors or, better yet, hand pruners with sharp blades," says Marriott. "The idea is to cut the stems neatly without compressing their water uptake channels. Their ability to take up plenty of water is the key to keeping them fresh."

Good cutting tools, he insists, are not a place to skimp. Higher quality tools have sharper cutting edges that stay sharp longer, and often worn parts and blades can be replaced.

For cutting flowers and light deadheading, he uses a small hand pruner—or secateur, as they're known in England. His personal favorite is Felco's #6 bypass pruner, a first choice of many florists, with a small cutting head that reaches easily into dense bushes. "They're quite small, and fit easily in



a pocket. I keep mine on me all the time so it's handy for cutting flowers and for quick maintenance too. If you prefer a hand pruner specifically for cutting roses, he suggests, look for one with a "cut and hold" feature that makes it easiest to retrieve stems once you've cut them.

Following are Marriott's tips for cutting roses and keeping them fresh in the vase:

- Cut flowers in early morning when they're fully hydrated.
- For longest vase life, choose flowers in the late bud stage, outer petals already open, flowers not fully open.

(continued on page 4)

## Folklore and Fashion in Bridal Bouquets

By Jody Morgan, Master Gardener,  
Writer and CT Hort Member

The bride carried an exquisite bouquet of garlic fashionably intertwined with herbs whose powers promised longevity, ensured fertility and provided sufficient fragrance to keep the offensive odors emanating from the unwashed guests at bay. Not the choice for even the most tradition-minded of 21st century brides, perhaps, but quite the rage in medieval Europe. Garlic kept the evil spirits as well as the Black Plague away.

The custom of tossing the bridal bouquet began sometime around the 14th century as a defense mechanism. Grabbing a piece of the bride's clothing was considered to be good luck. Imagine having your gown torn to shreds by your guests! To escape their clutches, brides began throwing everything at hand including their garters and their bouquets at the crowds. Eventually catching the bouquet was accepted as a suitable symbol of favorable fortune.

Queen Victoria daringly broke with expectations when she marched down the aisle as an 1840 bride. Rebellious Victoria rejected the dress interwoven with metallic threads favored by generations of her royal family. She audaciously wore instead a simple gown of white. The snowdrops she (continued on page 5)

See you at the  
**CT Hort Ice Cream Social**  
6:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 21 (details on page 8)



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## Horticultural Happenings & Announcements

Note: Happenings are listed on a space-available basis. To submit an event, send details to [news@cthorth.org](mailto:news@cthorth.org). Please format the announcement to resemble the entries below. Deadline for Summer issue is June 15.

Thurs., June 2, 6:30 to 9 p.m. – **Farm Pollinator Dinner & Soirée** at Sugar & Olives, Norwalk, a fundraising dinner to support CT NOFA's **Organic Farming and Organic Gardening Programs**. Feast and celebrate bees, butterflies, and all the local organic farmers who provide pollinators good habitat and in by doing so, gives us all a bit of hope for the future. Dinner will be followed by a "Pollinator Party" with dancing into the late evening. For reservations, email us at: [events@ctnofa.org](mailto:events@ctnofa.org). To reserve tickets by phone, call 7 days a week: (203) 613-8813.

Fri., June 8, 6:30 to 9 p.m. – **Elizabeth Park Conservancy Wine & Roses 11th Annual Signature Fundraiser, Wine & Roses**, is a great opportunity to support Elizabeth Park Conservancy and benefit the gardens of Elizabeth Park. [Tickets & Registration](#)

Sat., June 16, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., rain or shine – enjoy seven amazing **West Hartford Garden Club** member gardens during the **JUNE BLOOMS Garden Tour**. Tickets available May 1 and can be purchased in advance for \$20 at Moscarillo's Garden Shop and at Butler Florist & Garden Center. Tickets can be purchased the day of the event at the Noah Webster House for \$25. For details, visit [www.juneblooms2018.com](http://www.juneblooms2018.com)

Sun., June 17, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., rain or shine – celebrate the 114-year old Rose Garden in Elizabeth Park on Rose Sunday hosted by the Elizabeth Park Conservancy. This Community Day at the park is FREE to the public. For more information about the Conservancy and Elizabeth Park, visit [www.elizabethparkct.org](http://www.elizabethparkct.org).

Weds. to Sat., July 11 to 14 – the **American Horticultural Society (AHS)** will hold its **National Children and Youth Garden Symposium in Ithaca, New York**. There is a discounted rate for AHS members so if anyone wants to attend, this is a great opportunity to join now for some further savings. This event is for formal and informal educators and designers who work with kids in the garden. Find more information at: [www.ahsgardening.org/ncygs](http://www.ahsgardening.org/ncygs).

Weds., August 8, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., rain or shine – **The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station** hosts **Plant Science Day 2018** at their **Lockwood Farms** location, 890 Evergreen Ave, Hamden. A family day that is FREE and open to the public. No pets, please, service animals only. For more information visit: <http://www.ct.gov/caes/cwp/view.asp?a=2813&q=376664> 🐾

Visit [cthorth.org](http://cthorth.org) for MORE listings and links.

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Visit [cthorth.org](http://cthorth.org) for the latest listings and links.



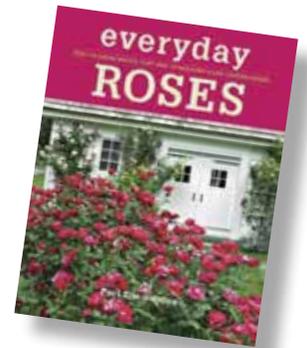
Paul Zimmerman and partner Pam Stone  
with their Jack Russell Terriers



## Roses are Plants, Too

### Thursday, June 21

with Paul Zimmerman, Rosarian



**Paul Zimmerman** has given hundreds of talks and workshops on roses. From Rose Societies to Master Gardeners to the big shows like the Northwest Flower & Garden Show, the Philadelphia Flower Show and even in Europe. Paul's talks are known for their energy, humor and simple approach to growing roses. Paul's approach to roses is that "**Roses are plants, too.**" This accessible approach has convinced tens of thousands of gardeners that they too can grow roses in a general garden setting using their own gardener's instincts.



Paul Zimmerman rose photo from  
<https://www.facebook.com/paul.zimmerman.roses/>

Paul Zimmerman has been working with, and teaching about, garden roses for close to twenty-five years. While living in Los Angeles Paul ran his own rose care and rose garden design company. After moving to the upstate of South Carolina he founded Ashdown Roses, which was a rose nursery that offered a wide array of garden roses. Paul closed the nursery in 2010 to focus on garden design, consulting, writing and speaking. He consults to both public and private gardens on sustainable care and designing gardens grown around roses.

Paul is Exclusive Rose Consultant to the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, NC and is Head of Design for the Jackson & Perkins Landscape & Garden Design Service. He is the author of *Everyday Roses. How To Grow Knockout And Other Modern Garden Roses*, published by Taunton Press. In his book, Paul debunks common rose myths and outdated care instructions, and instead imparts practical rose care advice in a fun and accessible voice. Paul is also member of The Advisory Board Of The American Rose Rose Selections™ Trials.

For additional information about Paul and roses, please visit: <https://paulzimmermanroses.com/>, and <https://www.finegardening.com/series/roses-are-plants-too>.

**Program starts at 7:30 p.m. but come early – 6:30 p.m. – for the end-of-season Ice Cream Social**

### CHS Program Meeting

Meetings are open to everyone, with a drop-in fee of \$10 collected at the door from non-members. For more information, visit [www.cthort.org](http://www.cthort.org).

**Date:** Thursday, June 21

**Time:** Program starts at 7:30 p.m. but come early – 6:30 p.m. – for the end-of-season Ice Cream Social and to socialize, browse CHS library books, participate in raffle items, look at travel fliers or get your plant questions answered by our resident horticulturalist, Kevin Wilcox.

**Location:** Emanuel Synagogue, 160 Mohegan Dr., West Hartford

### Speaker Feedback

After you attend a speaker meeting, please take a moment to tell us what you thought of the presenter. Your candid feedback helps us to arrange for speakers that will hold your interest. Take the five-question survey on our website – [cthort.org](http://cthort.org). Click on the survey icon found on any page then chose the speaker you want to rate. Thank you for your feedback.



## “Keeping Cut Garden Roses Fresh”, from page 1

- Avoid the temptation to cut from the back of the bush, thinking it will be less obtrusive. You want lovely blooms with strong stems, which are more likely to grow where the sun is best.
- Carry a clean container filled with cool water so you can immerse stems fully, immediately after cutting.
- Containers with handles are best for easy carrying.
- Having a few favorite containers is fun, says Mariott, whose own favorites are:
  - A big-handled white enamel jug he found at a second-hand shop, sized just right for 3 or 4 stems.
  - Galvanized French-style flower buckets for more.
- Once taken inside, re-cut the stems another inch or so, while holding them under water:
  - This step ensures that no air bubbles are blocking the water uptake channels.
  - Once re-cut in this way, keep the stems fully immersed in water until ready to arrange.
- Strip off lower leaves, as foliage standing in water can lead to bacterial growth.
- For longest vase life focus on keeping tools and containers clean.
- Be scrupulous in cleaning containers and vases: after use, wash well; before next use, rinse again.
- Fill vases nearly full with cool fresh water so that all the stems including the shorter ones are immersed as much as possible.
- Add flower food to the water to keep bacteria growth at bay, improve water flow and help flowers open and last longer.
- Refresh vase water every day or so.
- Lift flowers from the vase to recut stems every 2 to 3 days, to refresh water uptake.
- Once flowers are arranged, place the vase out of direct sunlight, as cut flowers last longer when kept cool.

*Enjoy the full line of fragrant David Austin English Roses at [www.davidaustinroses.com](http://www.davidaustinroses.com).*



# 2018 Spring Plant Sale and Auction

Thank you to everyone who helped with our Spring Plant Sale & Auction in Berlin. It takes many people to pull this event together from getting publicity out, collecting donations from nurseries and garden centers, bringing food and beverages, helping with setup and break down, helping with pricing, recording auction prices, collecting the money, running credit cards, etc. Thanks also to everyone who donated plants from your yards. All of the help and hard work is greatly appreciated. We raised \$5,364 for the CHS Scholarship Fund!

Many thanks to our educational and entertaining auctioneers: Lisa Elder from Natureworks, Liba Judd from Broken Arrow Nursery and our very own Maryanne Gryboski, Judy King and Kevin Wilcox.

The following nursery/garden centers generously donated to our auction. Please consider patronizing them when doing your garden shopping.

Acer Gardens, Deep River  
 Baggot Farms, East Windsor  
 Ballek's Garden Center, East Haddam  
 Broken Arrow Nursery, Hamden  
 Butler's Florist & Garden Center,  
 West Hartford  
 Cheshire Nursery Garden Center,  
 Cheshire  
 Cricket Hill Garden, Thomaston  
 E. Draghi & Sons Farm,  
 South Glastonbury

Flower Power Farm, East Windsor  
 Garden Sales, Manchester  
 Gilbertie's Herbs and Garden Center,  
 Westport  
 Gotta's Farm, Portland  
 Harken's Garden Center, East Windsor  
 Moscarillo's, West Hartford  
 Natureworks, Northford  
 Prides Corner Farms, Lebanon  
 Scott's Orchard & Nursery,  
 Glastonbury

Stone Post Gardens, Middletown  
 Stonehedge Landscape & Garden  
 Center, Newington  
 The Garden Barn Nursery, Vernon  
 Tower Farms, Cheshire  
 Van Wilgen's Garden Center,  
 North Branford  
 Wakeman's White Birch Nursery,  
 Trumbull  
 Winterberry Gardens, Southington  
 Woodland Gardens, Manchester

The wonderful wholesalers, Monrovia Nursery Co - Connecticut in Granby and Plant Group in North Franklin, also generously contributed plants to our auction.

If you have any suggestions for future CHS Plant Sale & Auction events or if you would like to be added to our volunteer list, please email [auction@corthort.org](mailto:auction@corthort.org).



## “Folklore and Fashion”, from page 1

carried for her bouquet were her groom's favorite. Did being queen encourage her to reinterpret the chivalrous custom whereby knights of old wore a flower representing the colors of their bride's family? That tradition came down to modern times in the suggestion that the groom's boutonniere should be made of a flower present in his bride's bouquet.



Shockingly, Victoria exchanged the jeweled tiara her royal predecessors favored for the garland of orange blossoms traditionally worn by Saracen brides. The Crusaders apparently first introduced the custom to Spain where imported citrus trees flourished and from there it migrated to France and England where an enclosed orangery was required to preserve the plants through the winter. The ability of the species to produce both flowers and

fruit simultaneously throughout the year accounts for its legendary connection to fertility. For Victoria and Albert, the superstition proved efficacious as the couple welcomed nine royal offspring.

For thousands of years brides have borrowed freely from foreign traditions to make their own celebrations distinctive. Queen Victoria's use of orange blossoms, while a break from royal custom, had sufficient precedent in Western weddings. Married in France in 1780, the Marquise de La Tour du Pin writes in her Memoirs that her floral bridal adornments included: “a bouquet of orange blossoms on my head and one to my side.” In 1828 an American bride, daughter-in-law of President John Quincy Adams, decorated both her gown and veil with orange blossoms. Wax replicas of orange blossoms once less expensive in colder climates than the exotic flowers are now vastly more valuable than actual blooms. Possibly echoing the span of time in which the genuine flowers faded, superstition maintained artificial orange blossoms had to be discarded within one month of the nuptials.



The myrtle carried by Victoria's daughters in their bouquets and by royal British brides thereafter came from a posy given to Victoria by Albert's grandmother when the couple visited Germany in 1845. Her majesty planted a sprig from the posy at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight where it still thrives. Evergreen myrtle has legendary significance as a symbol of both love and immortality. According to ancient Greek mythology myrtle was sacred to Aphrodite, Goddess of Love, and Demeter, Goddess of the Harvest. Demeter held power over the cycle of life and death. Greek brides and grooms wore garlands of myrtle and other greens. Romans added flowers to the garlands. Whatever wildflowers were in season were employed. 🐞



## Recent Royal Bouquets

In addition to the requisite sprig of myrtle, Kate Middleton's bouquet was replete with references to the language of the flowers popular during Victoria's reign. She carried ivy symbolizing fidelity, lily of the valley representing chastity and returning happiness, hyacinth suggesting the playfulness of young love and Sweet William indicating gallantry while simultaneously honoring her groom.

Beside the traditional myrtle, Meghan Markle's bouquet included a special tribute to Princess Diana. Picked by her son Harry from the private gardens at Kensington Palace, stems of Diana's favorite forget-me-not flowers joined lily-of-the valley, sweet peas, astilbe, jasmine and astringia in the design created by Philippa Craddock. According to a custom begun by Queen Elizabeth's mother, Elizabeth Bowes-Lyons to honor her brother Fergus killed in the 1915 Battle of Loos, the bouquet was placed on the Grave of the Unknown Soldier at Westminster Abbey.

*Editor's note: Jody writes professionally about the history of horticulture. She has generously agreed to share some of her interesting findings with fellow members of CT Hort. Jody can be reached at [mrgnj3@aol.com](mailto:mrgnj3@aol.com)*





## FROM THE FIELD



### CT Hort Members Collaborate in a Recent Better Homes & Garden Article

Member Cheryl Whalen, Head Gardener at White Flower Farm in Litchfield, was featured in the April 2018 issue of Better Homes & Gardens magazine. The article was penned by Tovah Martin, past-member of CT Hort and 2013 Melquist Award recipient.

Tovah wrote "Delphiniums... Deserve their Drama Queen Status..." The article interviews Cheryl and includes her top choices and how-to-grow tips.



### Cactus and Succulent Garden Visit

Saturday, June 23 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Elliman Residence | 29 Mabel Ave. | Danbury Conn.

Enjoy an exclusive tour of an unusual cacti and succulent garden, hosted by owner Cindy Elliman, Master Gardener. This open garden invitation is extended to members and friends of CT Hort, Master Gardeners and the CT Cactus & Succulent Society. No pre-registration is required. A fee of \$5 per person will be collected at the garden. If you have any questions about this special tour, contact Mary Anna at CT Hort - [office@cthort.org](mailto:office@cthort.org) or call (860) 529-8713. Office is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### Go native with Dan Jaffe at Earth Tones

Wednesday, June 13 from 4-7 p.m.

Earth Tones Native Plant Nursery | Woodbury, Conn.

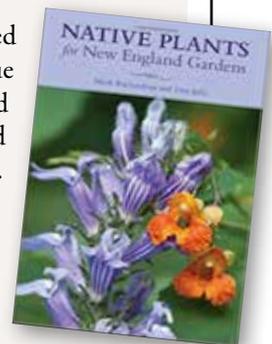
Learn about native plants from the source, when Dan Jaffe discusses his new book *Native Plants for New England Gardens*, co-authored with Mark Richardson. Dan was our speaker at the March 2017 CT Hort Speaker Meeting and his exuberance for wildflowers was palpable.

Dan's book will be for sale (\$20) and can help you select your favorites from the wide variety of native plants that are available at Earth Tones. You may recall that Earth Tones was CT Hort's choice for Best in Show at February's CT Flower & Garden Show. Owners Lisa and Kyle Turoczi are delighted to be hosting. Lisa is a Landscape Designer and Kyle has a degree in Environmental Science, is a Wetlands Ecologist and a Certified Soil Scientist. Visit [www.earthtonesnatives.com](http://www.earthtonesnatives.com) to learn more about them.

The afternoon's refreshments will be prepared by [Billings Forge](http://Billings Forge) of Hartford. Their unique fusion of locally sourced ingredients paired with their commitment to their Hartford neighborhood makes every dish extraordinary.

Cost for the evening is: \$25 for members, \$30 for non-members and \$10 for students with valid ID. Evening includes refreshments, a nursery tour, a presentation by Dan with Q&A and book signing.

Please [register online](http://register online) at [cthort.org](http://cthort.org) for this special event or contact Mary Anna at [office@cthort.org](mailto:office@cthort.org) or call (860) 529-8713. Office is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. 🗺️



# CHS Travel

Space is limited-  
sign up today!



## Summer in the Gardens

Wednesday-Friday, August 22-24

This impressive 3-day, 2-night tour escorted by Brett Isaacson begins with a visit to **Pennsylvania Horticulture Society's (PHS) Meadowbrook Farm**. Originally the home of J.Liddon Pennock and Alice Herkness Pennock, the 25-acre property was bequeathed to the PHS in 2004. Visitors can enjoy formal and informal gardens, seasonal plantings and an extremely diverse plant palette. It is rumored that the the Pennocks were known to say, "We didn't want to have an estate; we wanted a place that our friends could enjoy!"

Thursday will be devoted to **Longwood Gardens** and begins with a guided history tour of 'The Longwood Story' followed by a session with Dr. Peter Zale, Breeder & Curator of Plants and past CT Hort speaker. There will free time on Thursday to view the gardens on your own as well as to enjoy lunch at Longwood. In the evening you'll return to experience one of the breathtaking Illuminated Fountain Performances at the garden.

The following morning will be enjoyed at **Mt. Cuba Center** where beauty and purpose intersect. The Center was founded on an understanding of the importance of native plants, natural lands and conservation. The Mt. Cuba mission is to inspire an appreciation for the beauty and value of

native plants and a commitment to support the habitats that sustain them. Relax and recharge with a buffet lunch at Mt. Cuba before heading to a private garden in Nutley, New Jersey on the way home.

For the last twenty-three years Richard Hartlage has worked with Silas Mountsier and Graeme Hardie on their garden called **Mountsier Garden**. The space has deep personal meaning for the three and represents the history of their friendship built in physical space. For visitors, the emotional content is palpable with every detail and vista. Though a strolling garden at its heart, there are spaces to sit, relax and reflect on the vast collection of figurative and modern art interspersed throughout. Graeme has invited us to enjoy our traditional CT Hort Wine & Cheese Party in their garden!

Accommodations have been arranged to stay both nights at the boutique **Hotel Warner** in West Chester Penn. Once a grand movie house built in 1930, the Hotel Warner is listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

**Cost:** \$599 per member for double occupancy, \$759 for member single occupancy. Non-members please add \$50.



**To reserve your spot or for more information, please call Friendship Tours at (860) 243-1630 / toll-free (800) 243-1630 or visit [www.friendshiptours.net](http://www.friendshiptours.net) and select CHS Tours.**

*Dated Material* 🌿 *Please Rush*

### CHS Calendar at a Glance

- Thurs., June 7** – Final Board of Directors meeting and Potluck, 6:00 p.m., Glastonbury
- Weds., June 13** – Workshop - Dan Jaffe at Earth Tones Nursery, Woodbury (pg. 6)
- Thurs., June 21** – CT Hort Ice Cream Social and Volunteer Fair-6:30 p.m., Program Meeting 7:30 p.m., Paul Zimmerman presents *Roses are Plants, too!*
- Sat., June 23** – Workshop - Cactus & Succulent Garden Visit, Danbury (pg. 6)

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## Ice Cream Social and Volunteer Fair!

### Thursday, June 21, 2018

The CT Hort season always ends on a bright note. First there's the tradition of welcoming the coming of summer by enjoying ice cream at our last Speaker Meeting. And the speaker is someone extra-special, funded by the Isaacson Endowment. And this year, there's a new twist—the addition of a fair.

Committees in need of manpower will host tables to compete for the potential interest of volunteers looking for a cause.

As you've heard, helpers are needed in all areas... from auction to symposium... from just a couple of hours to a year-long commitment.



If you've got the time and desire, then we could use your help! See you at the Social!

Please note earlier  
start time of 6:30 p.m.

