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Honoring the memory of David McKibben are his wife, Cil, and Bill Dorn, Pittsburgh Rose Society president.

HARRY FUNK/THE ALMANAC



ANNIE LANE

Tell kids the truth

Dear Annie: I am disabled and use a mobility device and oxygen due to emphysema, which was caused by my 30 years of cigarette smoking. I quit before my diagnosis, but it was too late.

One of the biggest issues concerns questions or comments from others. When I hear ignorant remarks from adults, I consider the source and move on. But I'd like to add something to your information when it's a child who wonders.

I always answer the child. Most recently, I shared a table at a Japanese restaurant with a family who had a daughter who looked to be 8 or 9 years old. When I left, I got onto my scooter, and the child asked me why I needed it.

I told her the truth: I had smoked when I was younger, and I ruined my lungs, so I can't walk very far or for very long now. I tell that to children every time. If even one child remembers me and doesn't smoke, it was worth it. —Life With a Disability

Dear Life: Thank you so much for your beautiful letter. You are making rainbows out of clouds and saving lives. By continuing to use your own suffering to help others not suffer, you will live a life filled with joy and compassion. Thank you for that.

Dear Annie: I have been married for nearly three years. I am not happy, and I am pretty sure my wife isn't either. Our communication is terrible, especially on my end because I tend to shut down when I am upset.

Marriage has not been fun for me. My wife is very insecure and jealous, and she doesn't want me to have any female friends. I really just want out without breaking her or her 8-year-old son's heart. How can I break it to her that I want a divorce?

A year ago, I mentioned divorce to her, but I took it back because I felt sorry when I saw her crying. I just want to move on with my life. —Unhappy

Dear Unhappy: If you keep shutting down when you are upset rather than trying to have open communication with your wife, there is no hope for your marriage. Would it make sense to try family counseling so you could analyze your need for female friends and your wife's jealousy issues? I would suggest that you try, if only to relieve your feelings of guilt.

However, if counseling does not work, then by setting yourself free, you will be setting her free. She doesn't deserve to be married to a man who doesn't want to be married to her. It may hurt her temporarily, but in the end, when she and her son find someone who really loves her and communicates with her, she will be much better off and glad you ended it. You can't fit a square peg into a round hole, and right now, it sounds like you two don't fit. But give family counseling a try before calling it quits. You may find the love and happiness that you both felt when you were married.

Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

A sweet reminder

Pittsburgh Rose Society event honors late member

BY HARRY FUNK
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As members of the Pittsburgh Rose Society like to remind people, the types of varieties of the flowers go far beyond the red ones that particularly are popular around Valentine's Day.

Many were on display in all their stateliness during the 72-year-old organization's recent David McKibben Memorial Rose Expo, held at Mt. Lebanon Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

Preceding the event was a memorial service for Dr. McKibben, a pediatric dentist by profession and certified master rosarian by avocation.

"He was our webmaster and our newsletter editor, and he wrote many scholarly articles," said Bill Dorn, rose society president. "So we miss him dearly."

At the start of the expo, Dorn presented Cil McKibben, David's wife, with the Silver Medal Honor from the Pennsylvania-New Jersey District of the American Rose Society, which was awarded posthumously to her husband.

"We recognize someone every year for meritorious service to our district," Dorn said.

In addition to his Pittsburgh presidency, Dorn was elected

as director of the Penn-Jersey District. He will be installed and seated as a national board member of the American Rose Society during its national convention, scheduled for Sept. 9-14 in Milwaukee.

A resident of Pittsburgh's Windgap neighborhood, near Crafton and Ingram, Dorn grows 120 roses in what he calls the Windgap Rose Garden.

"My first experience was about 20 years ago, and I killed a rose. And then I became more interested later in life," he said.

"Since I work as a psychotherapist, I typically work in the afternoon and evening. So my mornings are free. And what I like to say is, 'In my office, I listen to my clients talk. And in the garden, I talk and my roses listen.' So it's a good deal."

In 2019, he was elected to the top post of the Pittsburgh Rose Society, which normally meets monthly for educational or social events. The group also periodically schedules expositions, with the one at the Presbyterian church presented in conjunction with Mt. Lebanon Public Library, where Dr. McKibben volunteered.

"There's no judging involved, and it's very casual," Dorn said about the expo. "Our members cut their roses and bring them to display for the public."



Pittsburgh Rose Society member Kristen Dotterway shows one of her favorite varieties, a floribunda named Hot Cocoa.

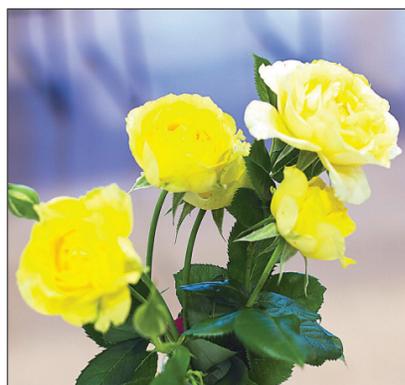
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For 2022, the society plans to resume its presentation of rose shows.

"That's a little more formalized, where roses will be groomed and presented, and judges will come and evaluate each rose," Dorn said.

The group's mission is to help gardeners grow better roses, and members offer free educational programs on a regular basis.

For more information, visit pghrosesociety.org.



The floribunda rose variety Walking On Sunshine features richly saturated yellow blooms.

HARRY FUNK/THE ALMANAC



HARRY FUNK/THE ALMANAC

Souvenir de Baden-Baden features long, pointed buds opening to 4-inch flowers.



HARRY FUNK/THE ALMANAC

Veterans' Honor is a hybrid tea rose that has been grown as a variety since 1997.



HARRY FUNK/THE ALMANAC

The hybrid tea rose Queen Elizabeth first was bred in 1954, the year after Elizabeth II's coronation.