

Rose Gazette

Northeast Louisiana Rose Society
Monroe, Louisiana
February 2008

Sunshine

These last few days have been wonderful with the sun shining so brightly to cast away the dreary days. I know that everyone is thinking about getting outside to prune and clear away dead canes and debris. Remember Valentine's Day is a good rule of thumb to prune roses and that will be our rose topic for this month. Candy



President's Message

Those that did not attend the annual Mid-Winter Workshop on the beautiful campus of Mississippi State University missed the best one yet. Frank said, "He did not know when we had been surrounded by so many people with Doctorate degrees". All the presentations were on a level that we as lay people could understand. Dr. Vance Watson, Vice President for Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine and the Okitibbeha Rose Society members made us feel very much at home. Dr. Watson and his lovely wife Jo Ann welcomed everyone to reception on Friday evening.

Attending from our Monroe society were: Becky Bourgeois, Bill Ransom, Nan Woods, Helen Roberts and Flora and Frank Hover

We know that this will be a hard act to follow, however the Acadiana Rose Society has volunteered to host next years workshop in Lafayette. They will be working hard to make it even better. I will let you know the exact date as soon as it is announced. Hopefully everyone will be able to attend this workshop since it will be closer.

Things to consider

Buy or order new roses if you haven't already done so. Withhold nitrogen containing fertilizers on these new ones but a handful of super phosphate in the bottom and sides of the hole will assure good bloom potential for many seasons. Planting new roses just potted at the nursery is a bit tricky since newly formed roots can easily be stripped off if and when the soil separates from the root ball. Our method is the following. If the plant has been in the pot only a week, dump it out of the pot and plant in your own soil as a bare root rose. Otherwise assume that the plant has initiated roots and plant without disturbing the root mass. Fill the hole to the height where the potted rose will eventually rest. Cut the bottom off the pot. Since the sides of the pot slant inward the soil mass will not be disturbed. Now set the bottomless pot in the hole and cut down the side. The entire side can then be removed, leaving space to be filled and compacted with your garden soil. Water slowly and completely.

In general withhold further fertilizer on new plants during the Spring season. On others start and follow a proven routine. Since everyone's soil is a bit different a bit of experimentation may be in order. A soil analysis from the LSU Ag center is worthwhile. Alfalfa meal and Epsom salt are excellent amendments. Repeat again in August. There are many soil amendments on the market that predict fantastic results and are probably good. To enter the root system bacteria in the soil must decompose all these organic materials into the basic inorganic form. A good

fertilizer is needed to provide the necessary food.

A thick mulch of almost any organic matter that will not preclude air and water flow to the underlying soil will sustain bacterial activity and keep down unwanted weeds.

By: Dell and Dan Scholz from *The Roseline*

Common Sense

Even though, all suppliers should ship pest-free and disease-free roses, it's just good common sense to inspect the rose when you get it. Be sure to look for:

HEALTHY STEMS

The canes should be intact without damage. Notice if the tips are dried out or snapped off. The stems should be thick and succulent as well as green but not leafing out.

HEALTHY ROOTS

Good, viable roots are flexible. Damaged or dead root have turned brown or black.

Be aware if the roots are in poor condition, the rose will not survive.

Congratulations Becky!

Becky Bourgeois was presented the Bronze Honor Medal and Certificate at the January meeting for her outstanding service to the NELARS. This is the highest award given at the local society level. We all appreciate your efforts on behalf of the rose.

February in the Rose Garden

Once again it is that time of year we have all been waiting for, the first pruning of our prize roses. Usually, by the middle of February, we will not experience another hard freeze so now we can begin the process of renewing our rose bushes. There are many different ways to prune roses and most all of them will do just fine. In some large public rose gardens where labor cost is a factor, powered hedge clippers are used and the results are very close to what is attained with hand clippers. The point is, **DON'T SPEND A LOT OF TIME AGONIZING OVER EACH AND EVERY CUT.** Roses are wonderfully forgiving and have survived thousands of years without any pruning by humans. A few years back, Flo and I pruned about half of the Shreveport roses at the Gardens of the ARS and someone else pruned the other half. We cut about two thirds of the bush away while the other workers cut much less. Six months later, it was hard to tell the difference.

The **DEAD, DYING, AND DAMAGED** canes are the first cuts made. After that, begin removing the unproductive canes. Some of our old bushes will have older canes that no longer send out long vigorous branches, and the entire cane will need to be removed. This often stimulates vigorous new growth from the bud union, thus renewing the bush. Also get down in the lower part of the bush and remove the small twiggy growth that did nothing last year except grow spider mites. With hybrid tea or grandiflora roses, canes smaller than a pencil are not likely to produce a quality bloom. After shaping up the plant to the desired size, strip off the old leaves so there will be nothing to harbor disease spores or get in the

way of new growth. After the old leaves and limbs have been cleaned out of the beds, spray on a liberal coating of an all purpose insect, spider mite, and disease killer. For this first spraying, we use a dormant oil spray, mixed with a good black spot killer like Manzate or Diathane M-45 at twice the normal strength. After new growth appears, begin with your regular spray schedule.

Mini and Floribunda roses are pruned in much the same way as the big roses. Old Garden Roses, Climbers, and Shrubs generally are not pruned much at all. Any real pruning should be delayed until after the first spring bloom. Repeat bloomers will produce more and better flowers if a more restrained grooming is performed. Some OGR's and Climbers will build upon themselves and grow into a mound of substantial size. Shrub roses like "Knock Out" don't seem to care when or what we do to them. All they need is a bit of slow release fertilizer or manure and they will take off again.

The annual pruning party at the Gardens of the American Rose Society will kick off on Friday, February 15th and continue on into Saturday the 16th. Baxter Williams of the Houston Rose Society will do a pruning demonstration on Saturday morning for newcomers that want to learn how to prune roses. This event is always a very enjoyable time with good food, fun, and fellowship, and provides much needed help to the grounds crew.

Nan Woods will host our next meeting on February 17th when John Smith will demonstrate his unique way of pruning.

Hope to see each of you at these upcoming events. May all your roses be Queens.
By: Frank Hover

Directions to Nan's home

Travel North on US 165 (Sterlington Road) Turn right on Finks Hideaway Road (by Brookshires) Travel 1.4 miles – turn left on Raymond Drive.

Nan's address is 107 Raymond Drive (on the left)

Calendar of Events

- Feb 16-----Pruning Party at American Rose Center- Shreveport
April 18 & 19---Gulf District Show & Convention- Shreveport – ARC
April 26 -----CenLa Rose Show Alexandria – Contact Mary Ann Miller
318-443-9768
May 30-June 1- National Mini-Rose Show, Oklahoma City, OK
Contact: Bert Wheeler, 405-282-2495; berkat@worldnet.att.net
June 26-30-----National Spring Rose Show & Convention; Denver, CO
Contact: Peg Williams Chair –303-691-2790
Pegwilliams22@comcast.net
www.2008arsdenver.com

Officers

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Vice President-----Bill Rambin
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