

The Old Texas Rose



Number 1

Winter/Spring 2007

www.texasroserustlers.org

SPRING SYMPOSIUM AND BLOOM DISPLAY 2007

TEXAS ROSE RUSTLERS SPRING SYMPOSIUM WILL BE SPONSORED BY DR. WILLIAM WELCH AND DR. DAVID BYRNE AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY ON MAY 5, 2007.

Mark your calendar and call a friend, or two friends, to attend the annual Texas Rose Rustler Spring Symposium and Bloom Display.

9:00 Sign in/Coffee/ Cookies/ Conversation/ ROOM 102, Horticulture building, West Campus. Parking Lot 74. Bring cut roses with labels for Bloom Display. First 15 entrants get to choose a Lotto Plant before the meeting begins. Best of Show will win a \$20.00 gift certificate to the Antique Rose Emporium. We have vases if needed.

9:45 Gather with Dr. Byrne for convoy drive to TAMU Horticultural Fields.

10:00 Dr. David H. Byrne, Professor Prunus and Rosa Breeding and Genetics will lead the Texas Rose Rustlers through the Horticulture Fields and Gardens. WE MUST BEGIN ON TIME.

12:00 Break for lunch on your own. You may bring picnic lunch back to Classroom 102 if preferred.

1:00 Matthew J Orwat, TAMU Horticultural Sciences Graduate Student, will present a program on work being done to identify old roses and other plants through DNA/Genetic Markers research.

2:00 Dr. William Welch, TAMU Professor of Horticulture, Founding Member of the Texas Rose Rustlers, and All-Round-Rose-Lover, will speak to our group about the "Peggy Martin Rose Project".

3:00 Self guided tour of TAMU Found Rose Garden. The Master Gardeners of Brazos County will contact us about area nurseries and other gardens of interest, and a restaurant for our evening meal. And of course, the Antique Rose Emporium is just a hop, skip, and a jump away.

Please tell your friends, encourage them to join us for this event and let's have a good show for these wonderful speakers who will be sharing their time and expertise with us at the 2007 Spring Symposium and Bloom Display. Prepare to be amazed!

In your "spare" time during the next weeks you might consider viewing the TAMU website for the Bayse Rose Program, and read about the work being done by these gentlemen.

Room Availability

A block of rooms has been reserved at two locations for Saturday night; Friday is available but not blocked:

Comfort Suites Aggie land
2313 Texas Avenue S, College Station, Texas
Phone: 1 979 680 9000.
Confirmation # 119-186
(\$89.00 / \$79.00 AARP) Facilities 1 yr old.

AmeriSuites
1100 University Drive E, College Station,
Texas,
Phone: 1 979 846 9800 x 7001
(\$95.00) Most rooms also have Sofa bed.

Mention Doana Fite or Texas Rose Rustlers to Tiffany D.

Do You Know

The goals of the Robert E. Basye Chair at Texas A&M are to use all the tools of modern plant breeding to study the genetics of the genus, and ultimately, to create modern roses with increased disease and insect resistance

died in 2000

Dr. Robert Basye was a professor of mathematics at Texas A&M. Following his retirement he continued to breed roses on his 50 acre property near Caldwell, Texas.

Belinda's Dream is perhaps the most famous of all of the Dr. Robert Basye' roses and has been designated as a Texas Superstar which promotes plants that are tough enough to not only survive but thrive in Texas. Belinda's Dream has also been designated as an "Earthkind" rose.

Donations needed by the Basye Endowment and Texas A&M Breeding Program include:

- **Truck or Van**
- **Tractor**
- **Book Scanner (not flatbed scanner)**
- **Rose Books**
- **Sunshine Mix #4**
- **New Laptop Computer**
- **Weed Barrier**

Save the Dates for Texas Rose Rustler Upcoming Events:

- May 5** Spring Symposium and Bloom Display, College Station
- July 15** Summer Rookie Meeting, Mercer Arboretum, Houston
Speaker: Molly Glentzer, Lifestyle Editor, Houston Chronicle and Author
- Oct 13** Fall Cutting Exchange Fayetteville Texas with tours afterward of Henkley Gardens in Round Top and more nursery visits!

Notice to Rose Lovers!

To all Rustlers, former Rustlers, prospective Rustlers, beginner Rustlers, Grandmother Rustlers, Grandfather Rustlers and Rose Lovers of Every type and kind. WE WANT YOU !

If you are not coming to our meetings, WE WANT YOU BACK!

If you are coming to our meetings, WE WANT YOU & A FRIEND!

If you came to a few of our meetings: WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

If you never came to a meeting: WE WANT YOU and ALL OF YOUR FRIENDS !

If you've been thinking of coming to a meeting: WE WANT YOU!

VISITING JASPER

BY Doana Fite

Martin and I drove to Jasper on January 11 for the Lakes Area (Jasper) Rose Society monthly meeting. We met and visited in the home of Betty and R.C. Odom and learned of the early pecan orchards Mr. Odom's father had planted all around that East Texas area. We were fascinated. We toured Betty's roses which she had already diligently pruned, as their winter is more severe than Harris County, where we live. We took pictures of the bare "Little Irish Rose" plant that her mother in law's family has passed down for generations since bringing it from Ireland those many years ago. Betty graciously offered cuttings and away I flew to the trunk of my car for my pruning shears! I propagated them diligently the next afternoon when I got home. They are thriving in their "Bobbie McKenna Style" baggies and peat pots on my front porch in the dappled morning sunlight.

Martin and I presented a talk about the mission of the TRR, a rose propagation demonstration and a slide show called "Rose Rustler Back Yard Tours" featuring slides of roses from Ursula White's back yard and our back yard. Ursula, your back yard was a big hit!

The Lakes Area Rose Society members are gracious, warm and welcoming. Martin and I

loved meeting each and every one of them. They have invited us back, and have offered to hostess a TRR meeting there in the future. Many members spoke of old family roses they would like to preserve, protect and identify. Betty and Carolyn Wallace have sent me charming and delightful notes and letters, proving that they are just as nice as I thought they were that evening. Both are also members of the TRR. I look forward to visiting with them again in the future.

A Celtic Knot Garden

(the rest of the story)

by Sandra Smith

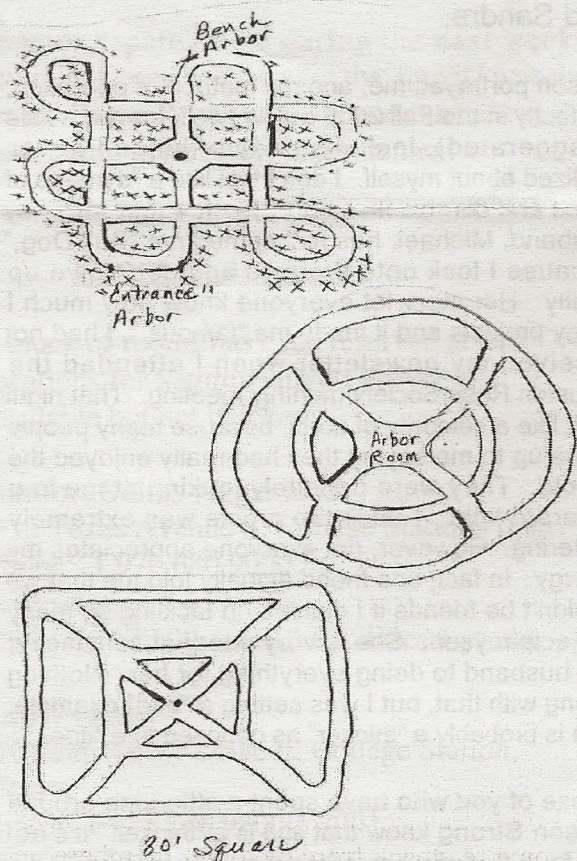
Yin and Yang. Light and Darkness. Life and Death. Logic and Creativity. Allison and Sandra.

Allison portrayed me, and my method of operation, perfectly in the Fall 2006 article (well, maybe a little exaggerated), including some things I never realized about myself. I don't feel like a "dynamo of ideas and constructive energy." It's just me. My husband, Michael, has nicknamed me "Bull Dog," because I lock onto projects and don't give up easily. Her story let everyone know how much I enjoy projects and it made me "famous." I had not received my newsletter when I attended the Houston Rose Society monthly meeting. That night I felt like a celebrity of sorts, because many people came up to me saying they had really enjoyed the article. They were definitely looking at me in a different light. I think the article was extremely flattering. However, not everyone appreciates my energy. In fact, one friend actually told me that we couldn't be friends if I didn't stop tackling so many projects myself. She is very adept at convincing her husband to doing everything for her. Nothing wrong with that, but I was setting a "bad" example. She is probably a "thinker" as opposed to a "doer."

Those of you who have spent a little time around Allison Strong know that she is a "thinker." It's not her fault that she procrastinates. Thinkers need a great deal of time to make decisions. They are very thorough, respond to lists, graphs, and charts, but they will never make one themselves. Allison had been a TRR member for a long time before she attended her first rustle, which was in Boerne. I have no doubt that she had been thinking about it, waiting for the "right" time. So it was no surprise

that Allison had dreamed of a garden for 5 years before actually breaking ground in the meadow, even though her front yard was lovingly referred to as the pot ghetto. You see, Allison had rooted, collected, and purchased many treasured specimens, who were begging for a garden of their own. My heart was broken when a passerby decided to take some of these treasures, when the Strongs were not at home. The time had come. The thinker had to take some action.

"I think a garden should delight the eye, warm the heart, and feed the soul" (H. R. H. The Prince of Wales). That's why I quizzed Allison when she asked for my ideas on designing her rose garden. I wanted to feed her soul. I knew Allison was extremely knowledgeable about roses. I knew a little about her family and a little about her job, but I didn't know Allison. I needed an inspiration. Then her love of Ireland, gargoyles, gnomes, and castles surfaced. So what better design than a Celtic Knot? I immediately sent her three ideas (see below).

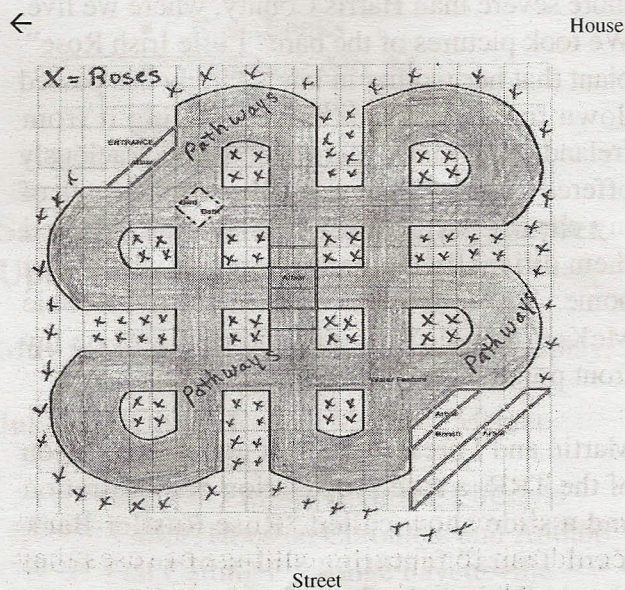


After Allison chose the knot that most appealed to her, I designed it to scale (4' equal to one square), including 8' wide paths, per Allison's request, to

allow ample space for strolling side-by-side. The garden was about 80' X 80', with space for 200+ roses. Included in the plans are arbors, a water feature, a sculpture or birdbath, and a "garden room," with suggestions for various theme gardens within the garden.

So, much like Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, we embarked on this adventure to create an enchanted garden. And much like the smooth-talking Tom Sawyer, Allison cleverly persuaded me to continue on the project by feigning helplessness, long after the plans were on paper. The challenge drew me to the project, just like the moth that is drawn to the fire.

After Allison's approval, it was time to put the plan on the ground, but Allison didn't know where to begin. Then Michael and I came to the rescue. We made the center arbor directly east and west to allow for the best sunlight, with all the symmetrical pathways and beds coming off the center. Roads to and from ancient towns were often curved and windy, an attempt to disorient and keep away evil spirits, who were believed to travel in straight lines. Therefore, the entrance was created off center from the house and angled. We had to work around some irrigation faucets that had been installed previously (which were later changed to drip irrigation), to insure that they would be in a bed and not in a path. After the "bones" were established, we were able to recreate the plan on the ground with a compass, stakes, string, and surveyor tape.



The Final Version Drawn to Scale

I was very proud of Allison for getting her soil analysis (She didn't take too much time to think about it). In fact, she took instructions quite well, considering that she often had no idea why, until

the knot began to take shape. She trusted me and I was flattered by her trust. However, she never asked me what to do with the leftover wine in the bottle we had enjoyed one evening to celebrate our progress, even in the misting rain. Later, much to my dismay, she told me that she had poured out the remaining nectar, at which time I explained to her that she had definitely committed alcohol abuse. The Irish faeries even stopped dancing for a while. Allison did do her share of work, such as convincing Johnny that it would be a good idea to cut down two huge sweet gum trees. Once the decision was made, the trees were gone in a heartbeat. Not only had the time come, but it was speeding by.

Many concessions are made when we gardeners are restricted by time or budget or pre-existing structures. Yes, in a perfect world, the soil would have been tilled and amended even before the initial irrigation was installed, especially because of the sandy soil. However, with 8-foot paths, much of the nutrients would have been wasted. As everyone knows, it takes time and work to perfect the soil with amendments, allowing the earthworms and biology to perform their "miracles." As the soil becomes more friable, the weeds will be easier to remove. I look forward to hearing more about the weed barrier cloth Allison has installed, because I don't know of anyone who has used it successfully. However, it certainly is worth a try. It has to work better than a weed eater! ;-)

I would have done a few other things differently, but then it's Allison's garden, not mine!! Allison's trials and tribulations were both educational and entertaining. I am convinced that the praying mantis, walking sticks, and ladybugs do turn into faeries after dark, surrounded by the twinkling of the fireflies. After all, a garden delights the eye, warms the heart, and feeds the soul.

The Cutting Edge

By Don Gerard

Since we all have various amounts of antique roses, it is difficult to know which one's to take cuttings of for the Cutting Exchange. We thought it might be a good idea to post a list of the roses we could bring, so that other members could ask for specific cuttings of roses they may not have or have lost and wish to replace. We would like to suggest this be established as a routine part of the Old Texas Rose with the hope that everyone will supply a list so all the Rustlers can see what might be available

simply for the asking. Actually, we would not have to limit supplying the cuttings to just the Exchange meeting. Anyone wanting cuttings can contact us at any time and we can discuss how to get the cuttings to them. Perhaps meeting somewhere for lunch or a visit to see the other member's "Rose" garden.

dgerard@brazosport.edu

979-297-3460 (Leave a message)

Rose Cuttings Available from Don & Pat Gerard

1. Madam Berkley
2. Swamp Rose
3. Ducher
4. Marie Van Houtte
5. Iceberg
6. Cecile Brunner
7. Old Blush
8. Marie Daley
9. Comtess du Cayla
10. Francis Dubreuil
11. Hwy 290 Pink Buttons
12. Carefree Beauty
13. Souvenir de La Malmaison
14. Madame Joseph Schwartz
15. Perle des Jardins
16. Belinda's Dream
17. Zephirine Drouhin
18. Veilchenblau
19. Katy Girl
20. Mutabilis
21. Heritage
22. Penelope
23. Puerto Rico
24. Mrs. Dudley Cross
25. Green Rose
26. Chireno
27. La Marne

(Editor's Note)

I think this is a marvelous idea. Let's have some feedback from the other members.

The Chairman's Corner

By Faith Bickley

About a year ago I was approached to be on the 2007 Wharton Hidden Garden Tour. I guess any of us would be pleased to have someone think our gardens might qualify for a garden tour, but there is the element of getting everything in order when the time comes. Also involved in my decision was the fact that my gardens are anything but manicured and always in the evolving stage (but then aren't all gardens in the latter category?). I voiced that hesitation and was told that gardens of different types were wanted (well different they will get!). My real motivation was that I would get these projects swimming in my head accomplished.

The first thing my husband Harold and I did last January was to complete the water feature we had talked about. We had a prefab pool that we had used next door that could be reused plus Harold had always wanted a stream and I wanted to copy my sister-in-law's birdbath with dripping water. We did it all with Harold doing the electrical and plumbing projects and with my work on the digging and construction of the various elements. As weird as this concoction sounds, we loved the outcome.

Harold also was busy building benches and various other hardscape items which have added so much to gardens. Then came his unexpected death in April. The garden tour people assumed that I would back out, but I decided to plug on and am glad I chose to stay busy with my gardening. My goal all along had been to finish all hardscape by the end of 2006, and thanks to my brother's help at Christmas time, I achieved that goal. I look forward to the rose and shrub pruning and cleaning up all the gardens; the usual springtime work.

As I write this article, I am sitting in the warm house looking out on another cold and gloomy day. I do believe I am crazy as everyone in that I am getting cabin fever, but here I am looking

at this like a vacation and am hitting my other passion, quilting, with absolute delight. Soon enough I will be out gardening away to get things set for the last two weekends in April. Maybe some of you will get to come and see how I have come along on my preparations. By the way, Mom also was asked to be on the tour but declined and has never wavered from her relief at that decision.

The board had its winter planning meeting on January 13th here at my home in Glen Flora. This is our second year to do this, and it has worked out well as we get things set for the year so that e-mails will suffice for further decisions since we live in all directions.

We have our dates set for the three meetings in 2007 which will be announced in this newsletter and also on the webpage. We want all of you to get these on your calendar so that you can be sure to participate. It is such a treat to get together at each venue.

I also want to give special thanks to Sandra (and Michael) Smith for their effort in getting a trailer load of roses and other plants to the people in Louisiana who lost their gardens in Katrina. Sandra also gave a program while she was there.

TRR was pleased to be able to participate in this worthwhile endeavor by paying for the trailer they used.

I also want to thank Doana for traveling to Jasper in early January to give a talk on TRR, etc. for a gardening group. As always this effort seemed to also give back to Doana from all accounts.

I spoke at Myra's Garden in Bay City on February 10th and TRR manned a booth at the Arbor Gate Nursery Rose Festival on March 10th. I hope I have not missed any other special events or people who have given programs associated with TRR.

See you in May, Faith

I LOVE MY JOB

PART II

By Doana Fite

Writing about Betty Odom got me thinking. I really do love my job. When Candy and I first attended a Rose Rustler function, we each had one rose from the ARE. We went to the Late Bobby McKenna's Place in Splendora, and Bobby was sitting on the porch and watched us as we drove in, parked, fixed our lipstick and walked toward her. Bobby yelled out at us, "You don't need to fix your lipsticks, gals, just come on in; we don't care what you look like."

We knew instantly that we were in a good place. Ten minutes later Audrey McMurray put a pair of very fine expensive pruning shears in our hands and gave us the 1,2,3's on how to prune the climbers on Bobby's trellis. We looked at each other in stunned amazement and tried to do exactly as we were told. When we broke for lunch, we were beginning to feel like we knew something about roses.

Of course, we didn't, but we had been put at ease. I still marvel at the events of that day.

A few years ago, the TRRs found themselves in need of a new Program Chairman. Shannon Sherrod was retiring from the position to become a Dad, and rear two young daughters, of all things. No doubt, to also teach them in the ways of roses and other garden delights. That is what we do. I was asked if I would consider it and I declined. I didn't know enough, had a demanding job, and just had not a clue about planning programs. I finally agreed to assist anyone else who might consider the position. Well, a few twists and turns later, Ursula White and Virginia Sissom agreed to help me if I would consider the position again. Audrey said, "I will help you with anything you need." And she did.

There is an old proverb that says, "When the student is ready, the teacher will appear." For me, it was like that. How I do love being a part of a group of such single minded people who love these plants so much. How I love seeing

them come together to share insights, knowledge, techniques for growing, and plants. Since teaching Sunday School and rearing my children, I can not think of a role I have loved more than being honored to be the Program Chairman for this band of Rustlers. I learn, I laugh, and I belong to a group of like minded people. I believe I grow.

Baxter Williams, of the American Rose Society wrote in the Aug 06 Rose-ette a sentiment that has been echoed by other rose societies, ".... membership is slowly declining," has been doing so for several years.

The Texas Rose Rustlers not only have the mission of teaching about Antique and Old Garden Roses, we have the mission of perpetuating these roses so they are not lost to time, abandonment, or whimsical landscaping trends. We have banded together to love these hardy resilient plants and tell others about the joy of growing them. In the process we meet lifelong friends and have a lot of fun. Is it any wonder I love my job?

The moral of the story? Well, if you know me, there always is....

If sometime you are invited or perhaps begged and cajoled to consider becoming more involved as officer, committee member or whatever, do not fear. The teacher will appear.

Volunteers Needed!

On April 14 & 15, the Texas Rose Rustlers will host a booth at the Antique Rose Emporium which is located in Independence Texas. Mike Shoup has asked the members to help identify roses brought in by patrons. We need your expertise to help educate the patrons in rose identification, growth patterns and care and maintenance. Please contact Candy or Faith to volunteer. Of course there will be ample time for shopping.

A JOURNEY OF ROSES

Our trip to New Orleans

By Sandra Smith

The Texas Rose Rustlers enjoy propagating and exchanging cuttings and plants with each other, as well as throughout the United States. For example, after the 2004 hurricanes devastated Florida, the Rustlers shipped packages of cuttings to fellow gardeners to help them restore their landscapes. Therefore, it was no surprise in the spring of 2006 when our newsletter Editor, Candy Fite, proposed that we collect specimens for the Old Garden Rose Society in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, in September 2005. At the Spring 2006 rustle, donations were collected, but space soon became an issue. Donna Martin took them home to nurture until a plan could be formulated. Delivery would also have to wait until our fellow gardeners in New Orleans were finished repairing their homes.

In the fall of 2006, I had my own collection of over 25 roses that I had propagated plus the ones in our garden that needed a new home. I contacted Peggy Martin, a member of the New Orleans OGRS, to see when it would be appropriate for me to deliver them. I learned that the other donations hadn't found their way to their new home. Therefore, I volunteered to take them. I asked Peggy if I should bring other plants too. Her answer was an enthusiastic "YES!" That's when things began to mushroom.

Earl and Deanna Krause, Michael, and I staffed a Rustler booth at the Woodlands Landscape Event on September 29. The Montgomery Co. Master Gardeners were giving away bedding plants. When we told them that we were taking plants to New Orleans, they gave us all of the plants left at the end of the event. There were 18 flats. We filled our van and the Krause's car, drove to my mother's house nearby, for temporary storage until we could get them all to Coldspring.

One Friday on my lunch hour I saw a "Garden Club Plant Sale" sign. I stopped to browse and had fun telling them about the Houston Rose Society, the Rustlers, and our New Orleans project. Luckily, they asked for my name and number for more information, because the following Monday they called to donate all their plants left from the sale to New Orleans and asked if I could come pick them up. Of course, I said I'd be there after work that same day. It was two full carloads. I must confess that I did leave some of the houseplants, but not many!

In October, more donations were received at our Fall Rustle. Again, the van was filled. Then on Monday, October 16, it rained 7-1/2 inches in one day. The plants took a beating, but I only lost a couple.

We picked up the U-Haul trailer in Houston on Saturday, November 4. The following day, Michael and I started packing the boxes that were donated by Action Box Co. We packed the roses separately from the other plants and alphabetized them. Since it had rained so much and our rural driveway is very steep, we left the U-Haul trailer on the street in front of our house. We loaded our Kawasaki mule and our van and made several trips to place the boxes in the trailer. We finished 10 hours later then headed east on Monday, dodging thunderstorms all the way. Amazingly, we didn't encounter any heavy rain. Someone was definitely watching over us.

The following morning, Peggy Martin took us to the Botanical Garden to meet the Times Picayune photographer. Lo and behold because of the state election, the garden was closed but the bars were open. This IS New Orleans!

Finally, we found some employees putting up Christmas decorations, who let us in. Peggy led the way to the only two roses that had survived the salt-water flood. It was a miracle. We stood there in awe and reverence.

The survivors were the Peggy Martin Rose and cream-colored Sea Foam, which was introduced in 1964 by Schwartz. The photographer asked Peggy when her Society was going to have their next sale. The photographer said that even though he had only 2 feet of water during the hurricane, all his plants died. I piped up and invited him to the meeting that night. I was honored when he came. We enjoyed walking around the garden seeing various sections.

We left the Botanical Garden for the 25-mile drive to what used to be Peggy's home in Plaquemines Parish. We saw miles and miles of "ghost towns". Homes that had survived hundreds of years were now damaged or destroyed. History was gone. Just piles and piles of rubble remained. Occasionally, there were parking lots filled with white trailers lined up like building blocks, where citizens lived. Some had a wooden stairway and occasionally, you would see a potted plant sitting by the door, a feeble attempt to bring some beauty back into their lives. Peggy drove cautiously through intersections with missing stop signs or traffic signals. Remember, this is over one year after the hurricane.

Plaquemines Parish is where Fort La Boulaye, the first European settlement in what is now Louisiana, was built in 1700, and abandoned 7 years later after serving its defensive purpose. In the early 1800's, a magnificent plantation named Magnolia, began to develop. It was full of fruit trees, flowers, and crops, by the time it burned to the ground in 1891. Like the myth, a town called Phoenix rose from the ashes, when the slaves built homes in the same area.

Peggy had created an extraordinary garden, while her husband enjoyed shrimping nearby with his friends. Her parents, who drowned in the storm surge, lived in a house on the same property. They always chose not to evacuate when hurricanes threatened the area and Hurricane Katrina was no exception. Along this road, everyone had known each other, as well as their parents, and sometimes, even their

grandparents. Their surrounding levy did not break. The salt water surged over it, filling the area like a bowl. It was two weeks before the levy was mechanically broken, to allow the water to drain.

Peggy pulled into what was her driveway for 37 years. We sat for a moment in silence. Strangely, the car windows were covered by hoards of mosquitoes. I had to wonder how they were surviving without a food supply. There, growing over the top of a large shed, was the Peggy Martin Rose. It was the lone survivor out of 450 roses. Cuttings, from the original rose in New Orleans, had been passed from friend to friend, until Peggy received her cutting in 1989. A thorn less, fragrant, repeat climber that certainly needs no Earthkind trials to prove its carefree status! Dr. Bill Welch received his cutting in 2003 and it quickly covered a fence at his weekend home in Fragilee, Washington County. After the hurricane, he spearheaded the campaign to market the Peggy Martin Rose, with \$1 from each sale donated to the Garden Restoration Fund.

Michael ventured out of the car to take photos and the mosquitoes swarmed him. He somehow managed to get most of them off before returning to the car, where we were slapping them all the way back to New Orleans. There was one school in Peggy's area that had re-opened. It included all grades. Peggy stopped to vote. And just to let you know, we had voted early knowing we would be here.

We had lunch at the Red Fish Grill in the French Quarter, which oddly hadn't been flooded during the hurricane. However, the lack of electrical power, patrons, and employees took its toll on the businesses. We saw a few tourists in this area, all of whom seemed to be having a good time and spending money.

Peggy was a gracious host who took us to all the significant sites, including sampling the famous beignets at Café du Monde.

She even had packed an ice chest with drinks for the tour.

That evening we unloaded the donations into the library conference room, putting the roses on one side and the plants on the other, with all of them alphabetized in case someone was looking for something special. After all, there were almost 100 roses, cuttings, and over 400 plants. At the OGRS meeting, I spoke about our garden, landscaping tips, and propagating roses, including an overview of some of the donations that they may not be familiar with. Then Peggy presided over the rose "lotto". Those who had lost everything were given first pick in the lotto. Then those who lost most of their roses were given a chance to make their selection. Then the ticket numbers were called at random. I believe everyone who attended personally thanked Michael or me. Of course, we were pleased to hear from some members that they received roses that they had had before the hurricane. One gentleman brought us his favorite Chicken & Sausage Jambalaya recipe. I must confess that I haven't tried it yet because it makes one gallon, but I certainly intend to try it.

Imagine your bustling neighborhood, your local dry cleaners, restaurants, and schools. Picture your neighbors carrying on their busy days, complaining about the traffic and the slow postal service and their bank making a mistake. Then picture your neighborhood and adjacent neighborhoods empty with the exception of two or three homes. Imagine not seeing a grocery store for 20 miles. As for traffic, imagine driving with missing stop signs and non-functioning traffic signals if they are there at all. No restaurants. No post offices. No banks. No fire departments or police departments. Imagine no birds or bees or butterflies. No rabbits, armadillos, cats, or dogs.

The survivors continue to rebuild their houses and their lives, wherever they now call "home". Peggy and her husband have moved to

Gonzales, north of New Orleans. Her husband has purchased another, but smaller, shrimp boat. Many gardening friends have sent Peggy roses or cuttings. There are only a few special ones, not sold commercially, that she is still looking for.

In the Rustler spirit of giving and sharing, we hope that we brought just a little beauty back into the lives of these avid gardeners. Ever since Michael and I were flooded during Tropical Storm Allison in 2001, we had said we'd like to do something to help someone in need, but never knew what that would be. Propagating, collecting, and delivering plants to New Orleans was the perfect project. I have to admit, it was very healing for me.

Many people made this endeavor a success. My company had offered to pay for the boxes, but when Action Box Co. found out what they were for, they generously donated them. Thanks to the Houston Rose Society for loaning their projector, and TRR for providing the trailer.

I'd also like to remind you that the Martin family is only one story. There is STILL a lot of work to do. Our wish is that the donated plants help heal the New Orleans folks by reminding them that they are not forgotten.

SPRING GARDENING TIPS

Hopefully by now you have been able to find some time to complete your rose pruning. We tried to start in early February and the early March freezes tried to bite the ones who had new tender burgundy colored growth. We have just finished pruning and cleaning the big teas, Mrs. B. R. Cant and her companion on the back fence, Perle des Jardins.

Frances Brandes taught me that she feeds on April 1. Its time to get all clean up and pruning finished so that spring feeding can be done on or around April 1. Fertilizing before much new growth has developed will encourage healthy growth and bloom production.

I have a favorite fishing supply store that I like to stop at in the spring. They sell fishing worms for \$2.50 a box. I buy a box full (about 10 or 20) and transplant them into my garden under a few of the roses.

By now I have zillions. They love my garden and I love the earthworms. John Ferguson, of Nature's Way Resources, taught us this summer at the Rookie meeting, that earthworms cleanse the soil of many toxins as well as enrich the soil with their castings and aerate it with their burrowing.

Many nurseries sell Ladybugs this time of year. If you have never tried releasing ladybugs into your garden, you might really be impressed with what happens. Ladybugs are not expensive, they are fun to watch, children will enjoy helping you release them, and they eat lots and lots of aphids in their lifetime! Adults lay little patches of orange eggs under leaves, which hatch out and turn into ugly looking orange and black larva, which soon turn into more ladybugs in the garden!

Mulching is one of the best things you can do for antique roses, old garden roses, and well, heck, the whole flower bed. Mulching two inches encourages water retention for the upcoming hot days of summer. Mulching two inches retards the growth of weeds and grass, and the breakdown of the bottom layer over the year provides nutrients for the soil that the plants can absorb naturally.

Following is the famous Audrey McMurray version of the fertilizer "tea" used by such Rose Rustlers as Lucille Idom, Bobby McKenna, Ursula White, Candy Fite, and Audrey herself. My Aunt Lydia Platzer told me about "manure tea" back in the 1960's. She had

learned it from her county agricultural extension agent. Who knew? I must say, she had the sweetest tasting peaches I have ever tasted, and the most prolific zucchini. But that's another garden story. Her old garden rose which we call "Lydia's Love" is still thriving, too, at her now abandoned homestead. All that "tea" got it off to a good start, no doubt.

Is Your Soil Verklemt?

by Audrey McMurray
(reprint of previous article)

Here's the most common question I'm asked by gardeners who regularly spray liquid fertilizer on their roses. "I've been doing this for years and my garden has been great! My roses were never without blooms! So why is everything suddenly dying now?"

It could be that your garden is verklemt - all choked up. Liquid fertilizer has phosphate in it and if you remember from high school chemistry, phosphate is a molecule that will bind to just about anything. In the soil, over time, it will bind to the nutrients that your plants need to thrive and will render some of them incapable of being used by the plant.

The first thing you need to do then, is to stop using the liquid fertilizer. A spring and a fall application are about all that is needed for that stuff and really, if your soil is healthy the plants are going to bloom anyway. All roses will bloom in the spring and, if they are repeat bloomers, they'll bloom whenever they feel that reproductive urge! It takes a lot out of a plant to reproduce so why stress it by forcing it to bloom without a rest?

The second thing you need to do is to put back nutrients into the soil now, while you are waiting for those bound ones to slowly break down again.

Here is a wonderful "tea" based on the witch's brew Auntie Lotte, a veteran Rustler, published a few years ago in the Old Texas Rose. Apply this every spring and fall and your plants will LOVE you.

In a knee-high garbage can put:

4 chimpanzees of Medina, any variety

(Start pouring and say "One-chimpanzee, two-chimpanzee, three-chimpanzee.")

2 chimpanzees of fish emulsion, liquid, if you can find it

1 chimpanzee of Super Thrive

2 cups of manure - or - 4 cups of manure/humus mix

1 cup of Epsom salts

2 cups of alfalfa pellets or meal - it doesn't matter

Mix well. You can put a small coffee can's worth at the drip line (where most of the branches end) right away but most Rustlers let the mixture sit for a couple of days. Two days in the Texas sun makes it smell like something crawled in the wall and died. That's how we know it's ready. Be sure to water the mixture in after applying. You can be a good neighbor and go outside with your small coffee can at night, if you want, and the smell will hopefully be gone by morning.

Is this your last issue?

Please take a moment to look at your label. In the lower right-hand corner of your mailing label is the last issue you will receive with your current membership. Do not forget to renew your membership so you will continue to receive this informative and fun newsletter! Mail your \$10 to Don and Pat Gerard at 114 Buttercup Ln., Lake Jackson, TX 77566

The Texas Rose Rustlers
c/o Candy Fite
8020 FM 2502
Brenham, Texas 77833



Wally & Wanda Brown
8811 Abbotts Grove School Rd
Schulenburg, Tx 78956

Texas Rose Rustlers Board Members

| | | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|---|--------------|
| Chairman | Mrs. Faith Bickley | P.O.Box 174 Glen Flora, Tx 77443 | 979-677-3286 |
| Program Chairman | Mrs. Doana Fite | 1715 Lake Geneva Ct, Houston, Tx 77084 | 281 398 8210 |
| Secretary | Mrs. Kathy Hyatt | 29910 Keen Rd., Tomball, Tx 77377 | 281 351 2250 |
| Treas/Membership | Mr. Don & Mrs. Pat Gerard | 114 Buttercup Ln, Lake Jackson, Tx 7566 | 979 297 3460 |
| Editor-OTR | Mrs. Candy Fite | 8020 FM 2502, Brenham, Tx 77833 | 979 277 9335 |
| WebMaster | Mr. Eric Varnado | 1610 Marilyn, CR387, Alvin, Tx 77511 | 281 331 2350 |
| | Welcoming Committee | Mr. Eric and Mrs. Patty Varnado | |
| | Newsletter Co-Chair | Ms Donna Martin | |

Thanks for helping
on Sat @ ARK
& for spreading the word
about May's
Sweet to see
contest!