

The Old Texas Rose



Number 1

Winter 2001

www.texas-rose-rustlers.com

WINTER PRUNING WORKSHOP

February 10th, 2001 from 10:00 till we finish (or until you get tired of pruning and visiting)

We will be meeting at Splendora at the home of Rustler Darla Gips to help out with the pruning of the 300+ roses her mother, Bobbie McKenna, collected. This is always a good chance for us to see how the different varieties actually grow and perform here in Texas. Her garden is divided into two separate parts, one of which has a long trellis covered with climbing roses. The other part of the garden is made up primarily of shrubs. This makes for a perfect learning demonstration for the different pruning techniques used on each type.

Bring a folding chair, lunch, a dessert to share if you want, pruners, cutting supplies - baggies, cooler, and any extra plants you want to give away.

Here is how to get there

Take US 59 North past Kingwood, Porter, New Caney. There is construction just out of New Caney and traffic is diverted off, on and back off the freeway. After New Caney you will come to a sign for Roman Forest and then one for Patton Village. There is a big McDonald's billboard at that exit. Turn right at the

Patton Village sign and go over the railroad tracks. Once over the railroad tracks, turn right. Go to the first street (Hill and Dale) and turn left. Go down about 1.3 miles and when the road forks turn left on Spivey. The house is located right at the end of that street. The driveway is on the left in the corner of the road. If you get lost, just call - Doug and Darla Gips 281-399-1614 (Houston #) or 281-924-9786 (Mobile #)

Spring Symposium

April 21st 1:00 to 4:00

We'll be meeting in Tyler, Texas for our Spring Symposium this year. The meeting will be held at the Activities Building on the Eastex Fair Grounds next to the Tyler Rose Garden and Rose Center. The meeting will start at 1:00 although Rustlers are encouraged to come up early to take in the sights of the Tyler Rose Garden. Our speakers will include Dr Brent Pemberton from the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station in Overton and Mark Chamblee of Chamblees Roses. Afterwards we will be touring Chamblees Nursery. There will be more details of other things to do that weekend and a map with directions in the upcoming newsletter due out in mid March.

CHAIRMAN Mrs.Eunice Roberts	6845 Cayton, Houston, TX 77061	(713)643-8704
PROGRAM CHM. Mrs.Candy Fite	6910 Pembrough Ln., Katy, TX 77494	(281)395-9806
treas./members Mrs.Lucille Idom	13106 Blythe, Houston, TX 77015	(713)453-1274
EDITOR-OTR Mr.Shannon Sherrod	Rt. 1 Box 1005, Chireno, TX 75937	(936)362-9425
WEBMASTER Mr.Joseph Cooper	321 W.Craig Pl, San Antonio, TX 78212	(210)736-2383
SECRETARY Mrs.Virginia Sissom	11615 Wolf Run Ln..Houston. TX 77065	(281)955-2599

Did you know?

This is a good space to thank one of our members who really outdid herself at our Fall Cutting Exchange. Sylvia Harrington took on the job of contacting different rose related businesses to see if they would contribute to our Lotto drawing after the exchange. She brought in all of the fine donations we had and we all owe her a large thank you for her work. We should also thank those businesses who did contribute: Mills Magic Fertilizer who sent samples and literature, David Austin Roses Ltd. who sent catalogs and a \$10 gift certificate and finally Chamblees Roses in Tyler Texas who sent catalogs and a \$50 gift certificate.

Texas Rose Rustlers Support Public Television

On March 10th, at 8:45am, TRR volunteers will meet at the Channel 8 television station on the University of Houston campus to lend their support to the Spring pledge drive. Our very own Candy Fite will be one of the guests interviewed by The Lazy Gardener, Brenda Beust Smith, during the actual air time of 10am to 11:30am, as 18-20 Rustlers man the phones to record the pledges that are sure to pour in.

We do not have a full team assembled as yet, so your help would be greatly appreciated. In the event more than 20 people volunteer, names will be added to the list in the order they are received. If you would be willing to be part of this group, please notify Audrey McMurray by phone at 713-729-5307, or by mail (address on front page), or by emailing jamac80@yahoo.com . Thank you!

A recent trip to a large bookstore

revealed copies of Peter Beales' *Classic Roses* on clearance. This is a large volume with very detailed information about many roses. Also spotted was *Roses* by Phillips and Rix, this is a excellent reference book for many roses and is considered to have some of the most accurate photos of roses available. Lastly at the local wholesale club I spotted the new paperback version of *Botanicas Roses*. Even with smaller pages and in paperback this is still a huge book and well worth reading.

Guns and Roses

(Warning: The following story contains graphic violence and the names have been changed to protect the embarrassed.)

A Rustler, Mindy, has a nice garden outside of the patio doors at her home in the country. She also has several cats who were being scared by a local possum who would come onto the deck at night. Her husband, Barry, decided to scare the possum off one night by shooting his shotgun in its vicinity. Mindy saw him head out the door with gun in hand, she then heard a loud bang and a muffled "dern". When she went out the next morning she saw that half of her **Mrs Dudley Cross** was blown off! While the shooting of a rose bush is bad enough the shooting of a lady like Mrs Dudley is even worse. One would at least assume that a rose like **General Schablikine** would be used to being shot at. The worst part though is that Mrs Dudley is thornless so she couldn't even defend herself! As of the latest I've heard she seems to be doing fine. There haven't been any reports of black(powder) spot or of (gun)powdery mildew either! So the next time someone asks you for a "bullet proof" rose tell them you recommend **Mrs Dudley Cross!**

Fall Cutting Exchange at The Secret Garden Nursery A Big Success!!

By Virginia Sissom

The fall event on Oct. 14th was quite pleasant. If you didn't go, you missed a lot of fun! There were loads of bags of rose cuttings to browse through and choose from. Thanks to thoughtful organizers the bagged, labeled rose cuttings were grouped by variety on separate card tables, complete with signs explaining growth habits of the groups. This made it much easier to know which cuttings to pick for our individual homescape needs. Adding to the scene were several vases filled with buds of whatever happened to be in bloom in the yards of contributing rustlers. Toward the end of the rummaging and bagging, (it felt more like fevered snatching and diving to me!) even the buds in vases were made available to take home for attempts to root them! This seems like a long shot, to root a rose from a stem in a vase. But it can be done. In fact, my first success at rooting a rose cutting was an Abraham Darby rose I plucked from a vase at my first rustler event!

The location picked for this year 2000 fall event was a vintage (pre-1883) four-acre homestead in Montgomery, Tx., which is now the plant nursery. It was nicely landscaped with beds of in-bloom antique roses accompanied by pretty perennials and annuals. Seeing how a master gardener, owner Stephanie Wallace, has designed and grouped such plantings around the old dog-run home and the grounds was worth devoting the afternoon to! And having plenty of potted, own-root roses in bloom and available to browse and

purchase was a rosarians delight. I noticed more than a few came with a shopping list of certain roses they hoped to acquire.

Next there was a lotto drawing of donated, home-rooted roses or other donated plants. There was a very large selection of plants, and many of the attendees stayed around to participate in this event, to see what freebies they could acquire.

Although the sign-in list showed only 33 entries, the actual attendance of this event is estimated at around 50; a fantastic turnout!!

Thank you TRR Program Chairman Candy Fite, nursery owner Stephanie Wallace, OTR editor Shannon Sherrod and all others who planned and set up this wonderful time for us to gather and revel in roses!

● Almanac Dates ●

...from Blum's Farmer's and Planter's Almanacs for the Year 2001.

For rooting all cuttings

February: 12-15,19-20

March: 11-15,18-20,23

April: 8-11,15-16,20-21

May: 8,12-13,17-18,21

For transplanting cuttings and potted roses

February: 24-25,28

March: 1,24,28-29

April: 24-25,28-29

May: 22,25-26

To prune roses for increased blooming

February: 14-15

March: 13-15

April: 10-11

May: 7-8

Margaret Sharpe's Ten Most Wanted

When it comes to naming their favorite old roses, not all Texas Rose Rustlers agree. Says one rustler, comparing the breath-taking fragrance of one rose to the unique form of another is like comparing apples to oranges.

Recently, at a gathering of rustlers, Margaret Sharpe, veteran rose rustler of Houston, was given the pleasurable task of naming several of her favorite selections. Her ten favorite are:

- **'Fortuniana'** - This white-blooming, heat-loving beauty thrives in tough conditions including dry, sandy soils. The large double flowers emit a violet fragrance. In the landscape the nearly thornless canes spread 8 to 10 feet. 'Fortuniana' was discovered in China in 1850.

- **'Mutabilis'** - "The Butterfly Rose" earns its common name for the five-petaled flowers that change from yellow to dark crimson as they mature. According to Margaret, 'Mutabilis' also is easy to recognize for its smooth-edged foliage. New growth is brushed with bronze. This rose grows to 6 feet in all directions, shrugs off disease, and, says Margaret, is tough enough to come back after freezing to the ground.

- **'Cramoisi Superieur'** - Margaret includes this old rose because it "blooms all the time." The cupped-shaped crimson flowers exude a fruity fragrance. The upright plants reach 5 feet tall and thrive on neglect. 'Cramoisi Superieur' was introduced in 1832. It is sometimes found in old country gardens.

- **"Maggie"** - This old rose, collected by Dr. William C. Welch, tops everyone's list of favorites for its large crimson

blooms, heady rose scent, vigorous growth and tough nature. Its 7-foot canes can be pruned or trained up pillars. "There is always going to be a bloom on "Maggie"," says Margaret.

- **'Souvenir de la Malmaison'** - The original name "Queen of Beauty and Fragrance" describes this elegant rose. It has large pale pink blooms, leathery foliage and a slow-growing nature. The compact plants seldom grow more than 3 feet tall. Margaret suggests including this climbing sport in the garden, as well. It produces canes up to 12 feet long.

- **'Duchesse de Brabant'** - It is said that Teddy Roosevelt liked to snip a bud of this beauty for his buttonhole. As they open, the soft pink buds form into round, cupped blooms. Margaret describes this old rose as "a producer," referring to its nearly ever-blooming nature. Plants reach 4 to 6 feet tall and have apple green foliage.

- **'Perle d'Or'** - As if the clusters of fragrant, pink pompon shaped blooms weren't enough to earn 'Perle d'Or' a spot in the garden, this tough little rose blooms almost continuously, produces an abundance of apple-green foliage and rebuffs disease. When cutting flowers to bring indoors, Margaret recommends selecting bloom clusters that include a few of the orangish-colored buds.

- **'Cecile Brunner'** - Since its introduction in 1881, "The Sweetheart Rose" has decorated gardens and bouquets with its classically shaped pink buds and sprays of fragrant flowers. It won a spot on Margaret's list for its adaptability to everything from poor soil to shady conditions. The bush form reaches 4 feet tall; the climbing selection produces canes up to 20 feet.

- **'Mrs. Dudley Cross'** - Margaret

describes the blooms of this thornless rose as "pale yellow with tinges of pink on the edges. It's a frequent find, she says, in old cemeteries where it thrives with no care. Even with little attention, 'Mrs. Dudley Cross' rewards growers with an ongoing stock of fragrant double flowers on plants that reach 6 feet tall.

• **'Marechal Niel'** - This Victorian favorite decorates gardens with long, nodding stems sporting fragrant yellow blooms that appear most heavily in spring and fall. Once established, the plants grow vigorously. Because of its sensitivity to cold weather, this old rose is recommended for zone 8 or warmer.

Copyright Suntex Communications, Inc. 1996. Reprinted with permission of the publisher from the November/ December 1996 issue of Texas Gardener.

Editors note: This article was the first mention of The Texas Rose Rustlers I ever saw and like so many other Rustlers I was greatly influenced by her writing. Texas Gardener magazine was kind enough to allow us to reprint this and it is a example of the useful and entertaining information found in each issue.

THINGS I LEARNED ABOUT LIFE FROM ROSES AND MY WIFE

by Joe Cooper

'Juanita' is the most beautiful and fragrant rose in the garden of my life, and I cannot describe my joy when, suddenly one fall, I found her growing in an unexpected place.

She is a "found rose" from hardy stock who has grown all her life on her own roots, and she blooms continuously, filling my garden with

indescribable fragrance and beauty. She is a treasure, the kind of rose that any of us could only dream of.

'Juanita' is, as I said, an extremely hardy and forgiving rose, and I must confess, that she has thrived and bloomed in poorer soils with little care. Like so many other roses, she is a "hardy rose for difficult places", and she blooms without complaint. She is the pride and joy of my garden.

I am a relatively clumsy gardener, and slow to learn. You might even say that I am "all thumbs" and some of them are definitely not green. So, since 'Juanita' is such a hardy and undemanding rose, I must confess that I did not lavish on her the extravagant care required for Hybrid Teas. I guess you might call it "just short of neglect", no fertilizer or spray, and only occasional pruning. But, as I said 'Juanita' is an extraordinary and most forgiving rose. Despite all that I did, and failed to do, she just bloomed, and bloomed, and bloomed.

Then one day, I learned a great lesson about roses, even hardy and forgiving roses. You might even call it serendipity. I was at work, and for no reason that I can think of I called a flower shop less than a block away from my house and had them deliver a bouquet to 'Juanita'. It was less than a half-hour later when I got a call from a very confused and happy "hardy rose", who wanted to know if I had sent her flowers.

You see, even if the pride and joy of your garden is a "hardy rose", even if she grows on her own roots, even if she blooms continuously without complaint, even if she reliably fills your life with fragrance, even so, a little tender loving care and occasional feeding works wonders.



Coffee with Auntie Lott

Happy New Year! Let's hope this is a good year for all of us. While walking in the yard and drinking my coffee, I checked what damage the cold weather has done. To my surprise, just about all of the roses bushes were blooming. But it didn't kill the weeds.

Went to Gateway Ace Hardware store and saw Eunice Roberts. She was telling about the big shipment of bare root roses that were in, 200 of them, which had to be planted and tagged. She said that she really needed help. So the next day, with two other women, we planted and tagged - it was work, but also it was fun. She has some beautiful roses out there and they also look healthy. I said wouldn't buy hybrid roses but broke down and bought **Princess Diana**, one beautiful rose.

Here are a few more ways people used roses long time ago. Legend has it that once, all roses had been white but they turned red from blushing when Eve proclaimed them Queen of Flowers.

In Europe, women wore charms made of hips to keep their lover true.

For Persian maidens, the magic charm for bringing back a straying lover was to boil his shirt in rose water and spices. That's cool.

In long-ago England, a girl would pick a red rose on Midsummer's Eve day and sleep with it under her pillow to dream of her future husband.

In medieval Europe, knights at

tournaments wore emblems of roses on their sleeves to signify that gentleness should accompany courage. So much for romance.

I close with a saying from Roland A. Browne, American professor: "I don't know whether nice people tend to grow roses or growing roses makes people nice."

Warm Thoughts in a Cold Winter by Shannon Sherrod

There's nothing like reading all of the new catalogs to get one started thinking about Spring. Sometimes though inspiration, like the roses in our gardens, comes from older sources. Here is a passage that's kept me warm this Winter.

"*The Tea Rose (Rosa Indica Odorata)* may well be taken as a synonym for all that is delicately beautiful. What refinement of color; what subdued, yet powerful, fragrance do they possess! They are indeed the centre of loveliness; like fair maids at a reception surrounded by admiring groups, these lend beauty to the others, which may well strive to find a near approach to their sweet presence, that perchance they may receive a smile, and borrow beauty, diffused from their chaste loveliness. There has always been a warm place for the Tea Rose, for, *sub rosa*, let me confess it, this was my first love (I fear no conjugal jealousy or censure in making this confession); a bed of Tea Roses planted near my father's house first won me as a devotee to the rose, and by foliage and flower I learned to distinguish varieties among them before I even knew the names in other classes; I should now as soon think of doing without roses altogether as not to have a bed of Teas in my garden." *H.B Ellwanger-The Rose 1882*

Lotto Roses

We were blessed to have a large number of rooted roses and other plants at last Falls cutting exchange. Everyone who attended was able to take at least one plant home with them. The only downside to all of the plants being brought was that it did take a while to sort through all of them. Several of the Rustlers present have brought forward ideas to speed things along.

One is to return to the previous way of doing the lotto where several numbers are called at once and all those called go up and choose from all the plants available. Then as later groups are called people then choose from what's left. The advantage of this system is that people can choose what they want from what's available. The disadvantage is that if you don't know anything about the particular roses that are left you just have to trust in luck. We've tried making experienced Rustlers available to help with any question but when a large group shows up it's hard to answer all their

questions at once, especially if you can't see the tags yourself.

The other way we've come up with is to draw for each plant like at the Fall exchange. The advantage to that is that each plant is described as it's given out. The disadvantages are that you may wind up with a plant you wouldn't have picked out yourself and when a lot of plants are brought it can take a while to finish.

So here's the question, which system do you like best? We're open to any suggestions you may have, just grab a officer at any meeting or e-mail us to give us your suggestions.

Audrey McMurray has come up with the idea of putting tags on the plants you bring describing the growth habit, height, width, color, repeat of blooms, and other comments. The tag at the bottom of the page is her idea and could be copied and used with your lotto plants. Just think of it as your chance to be a catalog writer only try to be a little more accurate than some of those folks! Some of the finest fiction written every year can be found between the covers of plant catalogs!

TEXAS ROSE RUSTLERS PLANT IDENTIFICATION TAG

PLANT NAME: _____

(If this is a study name, please enclose in quotations.)

GROWTH HABIT: _____

PLANT HEIGHT x WIDTH: _____

SCENT? _____

COLOR OF BLOOMS: _____

BLOOMS HOW OFTEN? _____

SUN REQUIREMENTS: _____

COMMENTS: _____

(e.g., scent, where found, etc.)

The Blues Are Alright

by Shannon Sherrod

For every one red or yellow rose in my garden there are probably ten pink ones. This isn't because I don't like red or yellow, it's just that there aren't that many of them. When it comes to old roses there are more shades of pink available than Martha Stewart can name! My garden isn't just a 'rose garden' though but is a garden with lots of other flowers in it as well. Since I have so many pink roses I've tried to find plants that look good next to them. I'm not much at matching colors but I do know that blue and purple look good with pink. So with that in mind here are some of my favorite blue and purple companion plants.

Angelonia- This is a borderline annual/perennial depending on how cold it gets in the Winter. The last two years it has covered itself in spikes of purple blooms. It grows to about two feet tall and about that wide. Very low maintenance and blooms no matter how hot it gets.

Lantana- I know some people turn their noses up at this but if you want really low maintenance blooms you can't go wrong here. There's a purple blooming form out there called Lantana Montevicensis or trailing lantana. It does get fairly big, 3 feet tall by 5 feet wide, but looks great near large, fully grown roses. Don't plant it next to small roses as it could swamp them.

Byzantine Gladiolus- The old favorite heirloom plant. It only blooms in the Spring but what a sight next to the first flush of Old Blush in the Spring. Not the easiest plant to find, the best sources are people you know who have some.

Salvias- There are more blue and purple salvias out there than you can shake a stick at. You'll also find them called sages as well. Mealy Sage/Salvia farinacea is a deservedly popular one in Texas. It gets about two feet tall and is reliably perennial with spikes of blue flowers. Perovskia or Russian Sage is a light blue, airy looking salvia. The foliage is a nice silvery gray and looks good in its own right. It gets about four feet tall. Salvia Guaranitica is a newer variety that has cobalt blue flowers on a larger plant that gets four feet tall and as wide. One variety of it that I have seen was called 'Black and Blue Salvia' and another was 'Electric Blue' Salvia. Then there's my favorite, Salvia Leucantha or Mexican Bush Sage. It gets about four feet tall and will practically hurt itself each Fall when it goes into full flush. The dark purple blooms cover the tops of the plant and my wife uses them for filler with the roses she cuts. There is a smaller Spring bloom as well. The greatest thing about the salvias is that there always new varieties to try every year and I've barely scratched the surface of them here.

Mexican Petunia- I know, I know, it's invasive. You know another way to look at that is that it wants to live! Bermuda grass is invasive too and it doesn't have those pretty pale purple flowers. There are two forms out there, the older species type that gets up to five feet tall and the newer dwarf type called 'Katy'. When I started gardening I went out to my grannys house one August day to visit. She was showing me the different flowers in her yard and when we got to the Mexican petunias she grabbed one by its stem and yanked it out of the ground. "Here", she said, "stick this in the

ground when you get home, it'll grow." She was right! Granny and I don't have time for plants that won't grow.

Zinnias- Another old common plant that I think people sometimes overlook. The purple flowered varieties look really good mixed in with the old pink roses.

Society Garlic- A pretty plant that actually compliments your roses in more than one way. It has small star shaped, light purple flowers and looks for all the world like chives growing in the garden. Carefree and easy to multiply. Just dig them up every couple of years, separate the bulbs and spread the joy. It also has a deterring effect on aphids as they are said to be repelled by the smell of garlic. The smell isn't strong in the garden until you brush up against the plant.

Morning Glory- there are many shades of blue and purple available that all look good with old roses. Don't plant them too close to your roses though or you'll be spending a lot of time untangling them. They are easy to grow on small tripods made from old tree limbs and the best part is that you don't have to worry about how bad your supports look because they'll be covered up soon anyway.

Gomphrena- Okay I'm being fancy, its Bachelor Buttons. This old purple annual just looks good. They're not the fanciest plant you'll grow but they'll be blooming in August when all of the fancy perennials are fried. An extra bonus is that you can dry them along with your roses and the color holds up on them.

Larkspur- Another heirloom annual that will reseed itself. The tall spikes of purple come in about the same time that the roses are having their big Spring show. The seeds should be

planted in the Fall for a bloom the following Spring.

Petunias- The old fashioned varieties are classic companions to roses. Those of you who came to the meeting at SFA last Spring remember the species form that Greg Grant introduced to the nursery trade. It's called 'VIP' which stands for violet in profusion and thats exactly what you'll get. He then crossed it with the old heirloom types and came up with a improved selection called 'Laura Bush'. Both of them are worth looking for this Spring. They get about two feet tall and are spreading plants growing out to five or six feet wide.

Penstemon tenuis (Brazos penstemon)- This is a perennial form of penstemon that is the best adapted one for Texas. It gets to be two feet tall and has spikes of purple blooms. Not an easy plant to find but one worth looking for.

Verbena- Another low growing spreading type plant. This kind of growth habit works well under large established plants but can cover over small roses or newly planted ones. Homestead Purple was the fist perennial variety to make a big splash in Texas. It has since been taken over, literally, by Blue Princess. It will cover a area about six feet around and will go through several heavy flushes of bloom a year. It makes a really nice companion plant because it grows so thick that it shades out most weeds that would try to grow through it.

Those are just a few of the plants out there. I haven't even mentioned catmint, butterfly bush, plumbago, iris, purple coneflower, and French hollyhocks. So go to your local nursery this Spring and see what gives you the blues.

BACK ISSUES OF OTR:

1982: Sept. Dec

1983: May July Sep. Dec.

1984: May Sep. Dec.

1985: March May Sept. Dec.

1986: May Sep.

1987: Win. Spr. Sum. Pall

1988: Win. Spr. Sum. Pall

1989: Win. Spr. Sum. Fall

1990: Win. Spr. Sum. Fall

1991: Win. Spr. Sum. Fall

1992: Win. Spr. Sum. Fall

1993: Win. Spr. Sum. Fall

1994: Win. Spr. Sum. Fall

1995: Win. Spr. Sum. Fall

1996: Win. Spr. Sum. Fall

1997: Win. Fall(only)

1998: Win. Spr. Sum. Fall

1999: Win. Spr. Sum. Fall

2000: Win. Spr. Sum. Fall

(Please note: The quality of most of the issues prior to 1986 is poor. Copies will come out darker than usual.)

Subscription Information: \$7.00 a year for four issues. For back issues please check the issues you would like to order. Please make all checks payable to:

Mrs. Lucille Idom, Treasurer

13106 Blythe,

Houston, TX 77015

TOTAL COPIES ORDERED @ \$1.00 EACH = _____

First Class Mail

The Texas Rose Rustlers
 c/o Mr. Shannon Sherrod
 Rt. 1 Box 1005
 Chueno, TX 75937