

The Old Texas Rose



Number 3

Summer 2000

www.texas-rose-rustlers.com

Summer Rookie Rustler Roundup July 22nd

by Candy Fite

This year's rookie meeting will be held at Mercer Arboretum on July 22nd. This meeting is usually geared to our "rookie" rustlers, but of course, everyone is welcome!

Do we have a treat for you! We will have our own, Mike and Mary Herr of Herr's Lawn & Landscape speak for us! Please come with a notebook and a pen in hand, because they will share with us their knowledge and love of roses. Get ready for the wealth of GREAT information these two will give us. They can also be heard co-hosting "The Weekend Gardening Show" with Ben Oldag, on Sunday mornings from 7-10 a.m. on AM 950 KPRC.

9:30 - 10:00 Sign-in

10:00 - 10:15 Announcements

10:15 - 11:00 Mary Herr's Top Ten Antique Roses for the Houston Area and Favorite Companion Plants for Roses. (Q&A)

11:00 - 11:15 Break and Lotto Drawing

11:15 - 12:00 Mike Herr will give us guidelines for Rose Bed Preparation and he will also discuss Organic Rose Care and Pest Control. (Q&A)

12:00 - 12:15 Clean-up!!!

We will meet after clean-up, for lunch and a quick meeting to discuss next year's events. Last year we ate at the Potato Patch, it was delightful! WARNING!!! Keep your eyes open and your heads up! They literally throw bread at you! Anyone who is interested in helping plan next year's events, is welcome to join us!

The Mercer Arboretum is located at 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd., north of Houston between I-45 and US 59. Turn North off of FM1960 and it will be on the right.

Spring Symposium 2000 A Hoot And A Holler

Since it was held deep in the Piney Woods of East Texas I think that would be the best way to describe it! Thanks go out to all who helped pull off this weekend of rosy events.

Our first speaker Mike Peters was not able to make it due to health problems and our thoughts and prayers go out to him. Audrey McMurray filled in with a brief history of the Rustlers and Dawn Parish then gave a speech about her experiences with the SFA Arboretum. She then gave us a guided tour of the garden and even offered Rustlers cuttings as long as they didn't damage the integrity of the plant! I'd often heard the phrase, "a ripple ran through the crowd" but this was more like a wave! I'm pleased and not surprised to report that the crowd didn't immediately "prune to shape" everything in sight. The collection and placement of plants were very inspiring. A special thanks goes out to Dawn and to Stephen F. Austin University for providing us with such a nice place to meet.

There were many nice varieties offered in the rose lotto, including several I hadn't seen offered before. The rose display was large and offered those new to antique roses a nice sampling of the different kinds to be had.

After lunch Greg Grant gave us his slide presentation which contained loads of useful information and beautiful roses all delivered with his trademark blend of humor and evangelism. This is man who knows old roses and doesn't mind telling you why he prefers them!

After the last rose lotto drawing we then headed to Kings Nursery in Teneha where they had a wonderful reception laid out for us, roses, plants, and great food! What more could you ask for?

Continued Inside:

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	(409) 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?

Please remember Eunice and Gary Roberts in your thoughts and prayers as he's gone through some tough health problems recently.

The Texas Rose Rustlers are having a fund raiser. Mike Shoup, owner of The Antique Rose Emporium, has just published a new book on antique roses. **Roses in the Southern Garden**, (which is reviewed later in this issue), retails for around \$35 dollars. The Rose Rustlers will be selling them for \$25 dollars at our next several events. The best way to ensure that you get a copy is to contact me or one of the other officers and let us know you want a copy so we can reserve one for you. That way we'll have a better idea of how many to pick up. Otherwise the best advise would be to show up early or wait until the next meeting.

Lucille Idom forwarded me an interesting letter written to her by Gayle Chun. The letter concerned the identity of a local rose she had found. Inside the letter were a couple of photographs showing the rose's foliage and bud form. It was interesting to read that the buds seldom opened and that Mrs. Chun theorized that her climate might be the problem.

Did I mention this rose is growing in Hawaii? Now this sounds like a mystery rose that we should all go check on! I can see us now, all loaded on a pirate ship with the skull on our flag having a pair of pruners firmly between its teeth and Pam Puryear with a parrot on her shoulder and a rosy treasure map stashed in her boot!

I'll be bringing the photos with me to the next few events in the hopes that maybe someone will recognize it. As far as descriptions go I've never been the best at describing colors, just ask my wife, Melissa! I can say that it looks to be pink, at least on the reverse of the petals. The distinguishing features that jump out at me are the large foliage and large size of the buds. The buds are apparently used in some of the floral decorations there in Hawaii as it's a fairly common rose over there. So who volunteers to go check this one out?

I heard from Conrad Tips the other day who informed me that The Garden Club of Houston's 58th Annual Bulb & Plant mart sale will be on September 28, 29, and 30th this year. As usual Conrad will be selling a very

interesting group of hard to find roses this year and would appreciate any volunteer help we might could give him. Conrad told me he would have more details on the sale in our next newsletter.

With work schedules being what they are it was decided that we would publish the e-mail addresses of the officers in the club. This is the fastest and easiest way to contact many of us and those of you who have e-mail know just how convenient it can be. So if you have any ideas, questions, or comments about the Rustlers activities or roses in general just drop one of us a line. If we can't help you we'll forward it around until we find someone who can, consider it an electronic Round Robin.

Program Chairman Candy Fite
ldybugs@hotmail.com

Editor Shannon Sherrod
sherrod1@lcc.net

Treasurer Lucille Idom
LIdom1952@aol.com

Secretary Virginia Sissom
rosebandita@yahoo.com

Webmaster Joe Cooper
jhc3@flash.net

● Almanac Dates ●

...from Blum's Farmer's and Planter's Almanacs for the Year 2000.

For rooting all cuttings

June: 1, 18-19, 23-24, 27-28
July: 17, 20-21, 24-25, 29
August: 16-17, 21-22, 25-26
September: 14, 17-18, 21-22

For transplanting cuttings and potted roses

June: 4-5
July: 1-2
August: 5-6
September: 1-4, 30

To prune roses for increased blooming

June: 30
July: 29-30
August: 25-26
September: 21-22

Our next event

The Fall Cutting Exchange October 14th, 2000

We will be meeting at The Secret Garden Nursery, run by Stephanie Wallace, in Montgomery, Texas.

From Houston take I-45 North to Conroe. Turn left onto Highway 105 West and go to Montgomery, Texas (15 miles). Once there take a right onto FM 149 and go 8 miles where you'll see the Secret Gardens sign on the left at Martha Williams Road. Turn there and look for the old home, you can't miss it.

The old home is the last standing dog-run home in Montgomery County and was built prior to 1883. The four acres the nursery sits on have been landscaped with antique roses, perennials and annuals. In addition to the plantings the nursery is also home to a large chicken pen and many, many cats.

Stephanie is a Master Gardener and regularly speaks at Garden Club functions. She has done all the landscaping herself and has found several old mystery roses on the property, maybe someone can help her I.D. them.

For those who've never been to a cutting exchange here's an idea of what happens. You can bring cuttings of anything you'd like. Roses of course are the most popular but if you have some other plant that could use a trimming it never hurts to bring it as well. We try to collect the cuttings as close to leaving for the event as possible to keep them fresh. Cuttings with at least two growth nodes are necessary for success. Usually the cuttings are wrapped in a damp paper towel, put in a labeled baggie and then put in a cooler for the trip down. There is no limit to the number of cuttings you can bring. Some things you will want to bring with you are a cooler, paper towels, baggies, willow water (if you're so inclined), pruners, and a marker to label your cuttings. We also usually have some lotto roses as well so anything that you have extra of bring over. This is a great time to do something with all those extra plants and seeds you never seem to get around to planting.

Once there all of the baggies are placed on a table and everyone gets to look them over and at the appointed time the "shopping" begins. A couple of stems are all that's usually needed to get a start so everyone gets a shot at them. See you there!

Spring Symposium continued

The restraint shown at the Arboretum was balanced out by the vigor which the Rustlers showed at the nursery. I won't name names but a certain well known rustler could start up a second career as a packer for NASA. After seeing her shoe horn that many plants into one car I'm sure she's the one they'll need to pack for any mission to Mars in the future!

Stuffed cars and stomachs still weren't enough to keep some of us from gathering that evening for some good "rosy" conversation and Mexican food. There's just something about roses that brings out the appetite, at least that was my excuse!

The next morning was the big finale of the whole weekend. We caravanned out to Greg Grant's house in downtown Arcadia. Once there we were given a tour of his incredible garden. The best way I can describe it is to call it a Museum of Southern Gardening. Walking the grounds I kept overhearing people say, "this was how my grandmother's garden looked", or "my grandmother grew these years ago." Greg's collection of plants and the style of plantings he's made fit perfectly with the old farm house that's been in his family for years. From the swept yard, to the crinums lining the porch, to the bottle trees, to the chicken pen and run, all of the details "fit".

After enjoying the breakfast buffet that was set up for us we then drove a few miles up the road to Greg's parent's house. Make no mistake, Greg is no 'one trick pony' when it comes to landscaping. His parent's garden is a formal layout full of the Texas tough plants that he uses so much of. The view from the back yard was breathtaking as well. The collection of Red China roses was of particular interest for us as well. It was interesting to see them all displayed together so you could notice the slight differences between them.

A final word about the weekend is that the best part of it was getting to visit with friends and fellow Rose Rustlers. If you haven't got to come to a meeting yet try to make it to the next one. There's nothing like the company of fellow rose nuts to make you feel normal!

Thanks go out again to all who helped pull this together. Greg Grant for sharing both of the gardens and his great talk Saturday, Dawn Parish for her talk and tour, and to Kings Nursery for their hospitality. A special thanks also goes out to Candy Fite, our Program Chairman, for arranging the whole wonderful weekend.

Book Review

by Shannon Sherrod

Roses in the Southern Garden by G. Michael Shoup. Published by The Antique Rose Emporium in Brenham, Texas.

How many times has this happened to you? You meet someone who finds out that you grow roses and their first reaction is, "Oh, well I just can't grow roses myself". Your reaction then is to take them by the shoulders, shake them, and shout, "YES YOU CAN"!!

Well if you're the kind of person who feels that strongly about old roses and wants to see everyone enjoy them, you now have a new, much kinder and gentler, tool at your disposal. **Roses in the Southern Garden** is 174 pages of proof that roses can and do grow easily here in the sunny south. These aren't the roses that most people think of when they think of roses. These are true garden roses meant to be enjoyed year round and not just on February 14th.

This is Michael Shoup's second book about old roses and is a fine example of "regional" gardening literature. You won't find references to Albas and other rose classes that just don't like it down south. You will find Teas, Chinas, Noisettes, and other roses that are suited to our climate. Too often rose books try to be "all things to all people" with the end result being a hodge podge of roses that leaves the reader more confused than ever. This book narrows down the millions of roses into the ones who really are easy to grow in our area. This book also fills the void left since the publication of his last book, (co-written with Liz Druitt), **Landscaping with Antique Roses**. Like it this one will also become must reading for the southern gardener.

The roses are broken down into five different categories: Vigorous Climbers, Mannerly Climbers, Large Shrubs, Small Shrubs, and Specialty Roses. This is very helpful to those who may not be able to see fully grown examples of these roses to judge for themselves. With its regional emphasis you won't have to worry about adjusting the sizes up for our climate either. I particularly enjoyed seeing several roses photographed under different growth habits. An example of this is Alberic Barbier, showing how it looks trained along a fence as well as trained upwards onto a tripod. The sections on climbers are particularly useful in this regard. It's hard to picture what a twenty foot Noisette is going to look like when it's still in its little pot but now you can have an example

in front of you.

Along with the rose descriptions informative side bars are spread throughout the book. A history of the Noisettes, descriptions of fragrance, and even a section on Rose Rustling are included in these side bars. There is also a feeling from reading the passages that this is written by someone who truly loves old roses. The descriptions are clear and easy to read with all of the necessary information. Mr. Shoup doesn't go overboard with information on how to pamper these roses because they just don't need it.

A word needs to be said about the photography in the book as well. Not only has Mr. Shoup written a wonderful book but he has done all the photography as well and what great photography it is! If you're the type who hangs onto their old Antique Rose Emporium catalogs just for the photos, (and who doesn't), you're going to love the photography here. From the cover shot of Souvenir de la Malmaison to the shot of Lamarque slowly demolishing an old home the roses come to life throughout. No description of Ballerina's cascading growth habit has ever lived up to the photo of it here actually cascading.

Many of the backgrounds in the photos will be familiar to anyone who has ever been to the Rose Emporium in Brenham. Many of the other shots were taken at their locations in San Antonio and Georgia as well. Names and places familiar to the Rose Rustlers also appear often in these pages. Stories of Martha Gonzalez, Mattie Breedlove, Mrs. Meyer, and Mrs. Odee are all shared with people who may have never gotten to meet them. This is a great parallel to what Mr. Shoup has done for the old roses as well. He has made it possible for many of us to have roses that we may have never met either. Now he's given us photographs and stories to go along with the roses and fill them out in diaries of our minds.

Whether you're new to old roses or a seasoned veteran there's something in here for you. This truly is a great tool to show others the beauty that old roses can bring to their yards and gardens. So whenever someone tells you they can't grow roses because they're too hard just throw the book at them!

Editors Note: We will be offering this book for sale at our next few meetings and I recommend that if you're interested in picking one up you do so soon. His last book, **Landscaping with Antique Roses**, is almost impossible to find now.

Book review

by Lucille Idom

The Bountiful Flower Garden by Neil G. Odenwald and William C. Welch. Published by Taylor Publishing Company in Dallas, Texas.

Folks, I really liked this book. These two men have out together a wonderful book on growing and sharing cut flowers in the South. There are 191 pages and plenty of color plates with the name or the initials of who took the pictures. I didn't know they could put so many pictures and complete descriptions in this book. They show you how to pronounce the name of each plant, (I wish the rose books would do that). They list the zones the plants grow in, how tall they get, and the season of bloom. There is information on what plants will grow together and color schemes for growing and arranging. Everything is covered from annuals to trees. You find out how to condition the cut flowers to extend their life and yes, there are pictures of arrangements too. There is even a chapter on marketing your bounty and sources for plants and seeds. Even if you never cut or arrange your flowers, this book is a must have.

What ever happened to Joshua's Nursery?

by Lucille Idom

Some of you may have been wondering what happened to Joshua's Nursery. He is still in business at his place on West 18th and Nicholson in the Heights between I-10 and Loop 610. Joshua has a nice corner lot now and has arranged outside antiques with his plants to make a visit to his nursery a very pleasant occasion. He has annuals, perennials, shrubs, native plants and antique roses. The roses are nice healthy plants that he gets from Caldwell, Texas. So make a visit to Joshua's charming place and tell him we sent you. The address is as follows:

Joshua's Native Plants & Garden Antiques

504 W. 18th St.

Houston, TX 77008-3608

713-862-7444

If you go down Heights, turn west and go 4 or 5 blocks to Nicholson, it will be on the left. If you go down Shepherd, turn east, and go two blocks, it will be on the right. There is also a sign that says INSIDE OUTSIDE on it. That is for his antiques.

Lot 'o Roses!

by Audrey McMurray

This article is not for those industrious and generous Rustlers who can be counted on to bring in Lotto roses each and every meeting. God Bless you! Your contributions make our meetings so much fun, especially for the newcomers who don't expect to go home with a freebie. No, this is for the Rustlers who have slowed their propagating to a once-in-a-blue-moon pace.

First a nice thought, then a confession... One of the nicest memories I have of my first Rose Rustler meeting was of hearing my ticket number called and being able to go up to the front of the room to pick out a rose. I chose a micromini tea Bobbie McKenna had brought called Cinderella. Never mind that it wasn't an antique; I was tickled! The friend who came with me also picked out a rose, plus some bags of left-over cuttings of perennials and before we knew it, my baby girl, Mimi, had to be carried because her buggy was full of pots and bags! You know, new moms can get a little blue from weeks of round-the-clock feedings and I will always appreciate how uplifted I felt as I went home that afternoon.

Okay, now for the confession: Somewhere along the way, between that first meeting and now, I stopped propagating roses for the Lotto drawing. I know, shame on me! Like many of you, my life got complicated and spare time to set cuttings became less available. Now I really only propagate as a favor to pals who just HAVE to, like Pam Puryear says, "hab' it".

So okay, confession being good for the soul, I feel ever so much better and I hereby promise to set out some cuttings now that school is out. They should be ready to bring in by the next Spring Symposium. And I invite my pals, yes, you Vets who have brought in less and less lately as well, to do likewise. And let's even go one step further. Let's write a bit about the rose (or companion plant) on the tag or on the pot so Rookie Rustlers will know which rose to pick. There were a lot of newcomers in Nacogdoches that didn't know which one was a climber, which was a red one, etc. Hopefully we'll get enough Lotto roses to drop the VHB (Vets Hold Back) request and we can go home with a freebie as well!

Editors Note: My fondest memory from my first meeting, besides getting to meet Margaret Sharpe, was the rooted LaMarne that Audrey gave me. It's grown a lot since then and is one of my favorites.

What to do About Deer

by Joe Cooper

Quite often I am asked the question, "How can I protect my roses from the deer?" I wish I could be more encouraging, but the only answer that I know is to get a good dog and / or separate the deer from the roses. No matter what else you may do, if a deer can get his (or her) lips and teeth to the foliage, they will eat it. That goes for ALL roses, even Rugosa roses with millions of thorns, and Lady Banks roses that are supposed to taste bad. Furthermore, if the climate is dry, browsing food is scarce, and the deer are hungry, they will become quite inventive and innovative in their efforts to get within eating distance of your roses ---- with sadly predictable results.

The insatiable appetites of deer are legendary, and they are only whetted by supplemental feeding. Some uninformed people think that deer eat roses because they do not have enough other things to eat. These poor misguided souls buy corn by the truckload, and feed the deer in hopes that the little critters will get full and leave the roses alone. Well deer do prefer corn, and they will eat it first. But rest assured that when the deer have finished their appetizer and the corn is gone, they will eagerly move on to the main course, your roses. Furthermore, when the deer learn that you are putting out corn every day, they will tell their buddies, aunts, uncles, cousins, and casual acquaintances. So pretty soon your front yard looks a little like your favorite restaurant at lunch time on Mother's Day!

Deer may not seem like a problem for people in areas of the country with low deer population densities, but rest assured that it is a huge problem in the Texas Hill Country. About a century ago, there was a large and thriving population of mountain lions in the Texas Hill Country. Evidence of this condition remains in the names of towns and geographical features immediately north of San Antonio, such as, "Leon Creek", "Leon Springs", "Leon Valley", etc. ("leon" is the Spanish word for lion). The mountain lion's breakfast, lunch, and dinner of choice was (and still is) deer. So in those happy days, there were rather few deer, and unprotected roses and ornamental plants had a reasonable chance of lasting more than just one night. Unfortunately, the mountain lions had a regrettable habit of spicing up their bland diet by eating an occasional calf, dog, or child, and this culinary habit was one to which the ranchers took great exception. The entirely

predictable result was (a) that the ranchers tried to exterminate the mountain lions, and (b) that the deer population exploded. By 1967, a survey of deer populations in Kendall County by the Parks and Wildlife Department indicated that there was one deer for every 2-1/2 acres.

Deer are very much like goats. They will eat practically anything, but they prefer the tender foliage of new growth on small trees, shrubs and particularly roses. Deer are also like goats in that they never seem to have eaten enough to fully satisfy them. Cows will eat for a while and then lie down to digest and rest. But not deer they just nibble, and nibble, and nibble their way through life.

So what can you do to protect your landscape and roses from the deer? There are several creative, if mostly impractical, answers:

OPTION 1: (Not really recommended)

Get a pet mountain lion.

OPTION 2:

Get a pet that resembles some other ferocious predator. A sizable, territorial, and aggressive dog fits the bill pretty well. Unfortunately, there is always the possibility that your dog will take his job a bit too seriously, and either (a) spend his days and nights barking at the deer, with predictable effect on your sleep habits, or (b) spend his days and nights chasing deer all over the countryside, which will leave your roses unprotected from the next deer that passes by. Therefore, if you get a dog, it is best to enclose him in a low fence that also encloses your rose garden. That way, Fido may stick around long enough to discourage the deer. Actually, the size of the dog does not seem to matter very much as long as his behavior is convincing. I have seen a lot of deer run for their lives from a yappy 20-pound dog.

OPTION 3:

Simulate the aftermath of a predator attack. Some people have invested a lot of time, energy and money in trying to convince the deer that something really bad has just happened in their rose garden. The general approach is to buy a lot of blood meal and spread it around. The deer smell the blood and decide that this might not be a safe place to have a leisurely lunch. It is a very effective short term solution, but the deer will eventually decide that it is just another futile human attempt to keep them from eating the roses, and the nibbling and munching will resume. Also,

while the smell of blood is initially offensive to deer, it seems to be even more offensive to humans and for a much longer time. In other words, if you make your rose garden stink for the deer, it will probably stink for you too. Finally, blood meal is a good fertilizer because it quickly soaks into the ground in response to rain (an unlikely circumstance in the Texas Hill Country) or supplemental irrigation. So once you get on the "apply the blood meal" treadmill, you can expect to expend a lot of effort, energy, and money until you figure out that there has got to be a better way.

OPTION 4:

Simulate around-the-clock human presence and activity. A lot of creative energy has been put into this option with decidedly mixed results. Some people collect hair clippings from barbers and spread it around to keep a fresh human scent in the area. That works for a while, but sooner or later, the deer figure out that the scent of human hair does not equate to imminent danger, and they resume nibbling. Similar approaches have been taken using motion sensing lights. The deer are frightened for a week or two by the lights suddenly turning on, but then they become accustomed to the lights and seem to appreciate the help you are giving them in finding the roses. An unfortunate side effect of the automatic light approach is that most people wake up when the lights go on, because they associate the sudden illumination from burglar lights with burglars. So much for a good night's sleep.

OPTION 5: (Definitely not recommended)

Application of deadly force. In desperation some people are driven to using deadly force. You may recall the final minutes of an old classic movie called *The Yearling*, in which a persistent pet deer came to grief at the business end of a rifle. That approach is extremely effective in individual cases, but deer in the Texas Hill Country rather resemble the Chinese army, and you will probably run out of ammunition before you run out of deer. Also, there can be unfortunate, if not totally unanticipated, consequences when the local Game Warden shows up.

OPTION 6: (Now we are getting somewhere)

Separate the deer from the roses. This is the only solution that I have found that really works. That is why the 6 acres of display garden at the Peaceful Habitations Rose Gardens are surrounded by an 8 foot deer proof fence. Ah, bliss and tranquility! The deer just have to content themselves with trimming the stray canes of climbing roses that venture

through the fence. This solution is rather expensive, but it does work and it is a passive, long-term solution. Our fence has been quite effective since 1984. If an 8 foot deer proof fence is beyond your budget, there are other solutions. Deer do not feel comfortable in confined spaces. They will cheerfully leap a 4 foot fence in a single bound, but if you have two parallel 4 foot fences that are only 3 or 4 feet apart, the deer will not cross them. The reason is that once they jump the first fence, they wind up in a very confined area that is quite frightening to them. So two parallel, closely spaced, low fences work about as well as one high deer proof fence. However, the cost of two low fences is significant, and if you have a gate, it has to be a double gate (one in each fence). Also, since the deer will avoid the area between the two fences, you will have lots of grass and weeds there, so leave enough room for your riding lawnmower and plan your weekends accordingly. All in all, the low fence approach may be more trouble, and may cost more, than it is worth.

Another alternative relies on a devilishly ingenious invention called the electric fence. This little device generates pulses of very high voltages (thousands of volts) for very short periods of time (thousandths of a second). You simply string a bare wire suspended by insulators that are attached to posts, and be sure to route the electric fence where the deer will find it before they reach the roses. The result can be visually entertaining, but most unpleasant for the deer. Furthermore, the structure for the electric fence can be very light and inexpensive. I have used 3/8" steel reinforcing rods for posts with some success in the past. However the enclosure must be complete, including walkways and gates. This means you are always carefully stepping over the electric fence or carefully opening and closing a special gap to get in and out of the enclosure. But that is a small price to pay for the level of protection that the electric fence affords. However, I do have one word for the wise. The electric fence is not easily trained to distinguish between you and a deer. If it will ZAP a deer, it will also ZAP you---- with a smile on its face. There is an old, and possibly apocryphal, story about a rose lover in deer country who chose the electric fence option. One day while dead heading and pruning his favorite rose, he backed up a little more than usual. Imagine his surprise when his rear end found the electric fence. Why you could hear every word he said all over the county, and the clippers he was holding at the time, well, I

don't think that they were ever found.

CONCLUSIONS:

So there you have it. Nothing you can do will convince the deer not to eat your roses. Nothing you can do (legally) will significantly reduce the deer population. Nothing you can do will totally and permanently convince the deer to stay away from a place where they have found their favorite food. So the best solution is a good, big, territorial dog and / or a good fence. Good luck, and keep on smelling the roses!

Notes from Serenity Pond

by Patricia McCain

Serenity Pond, a wild bird sanctuary, is named for the several ponds located on 10 acres outside of Bryan, in Kurten, Texas. However due to 4 years of drought many of the ponds have dried up making them very shallow. All of the swamp areas are gone, so some of the natural growth has gone too. With that there has been some "shifting" with wildlife; for example the large swamp rabbits come up to the house to nest and of course feed on the antique roses.

Deer go after the roses like children in a candy store. Many solutions have been sought to keep deer off roses, blood meal, human hair, and various sprays. I even tried a large 110 pound dog who was fearless; he killed poisonous snakes, wild pigs, and could bite through the shell of a armadillo. That produced some positives and negatives. Because he loved swimming in the ponds he suffered from constant ear aches and in spite of medication lost his hearing. The deer would sneak in day or night, whenever he was napping, they seem to have a built in radar for such things! As a result many of the roses would never bloom and I have over one hundred. That problem has been solved! After Sport, the bear dog, passed away I got an Australian Shepherd. Australian Shepherds and Border Collies are very active dogs that absolutely must have a job to do and they take their job extremely serious. It was necessary to put up a fence so as to confine her to just the planted areas around the house, approximately four acres. The purpose was to keep the deer off the roses and vegetables, not off the entire sanctuary nor out of the Kurten area nor Brazos County!

The attempt was to leave what I could as natural as possible and live in harmony with nature. The open areas give plenty of sunshine for rose gardens. In other areas a spring

blooming climber may have to compete with a wild grape vine. I have three kinds of grapes, common names: Mustang, Post Oak, and Muscadine. A spreading Farkleberry bush, a native blueberry, *Vaccinium arboreum*, and a Redbud tree are protected in the middle of the gardens.

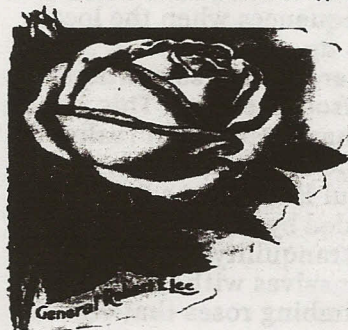
Paths through the fields are bright with color and the sweet smells of spring wildflowers, and the woods reveal footprints of deer. They have not suffered from the loss of access to roses. However the once planned large massive growths of old climbing roses, (such as Seven Sisters), to form a hedge row to border the field along the county road is no longer a reality. Adjustments have to be made, but such is life. I said I wanted to live in harmony with nature. I do want to keep "serenity" here.

Through the school of experience I have learned a few things, such as how close a rose can be planted next to a Cedar tree. Cedar trees are a wonderful habitat for birds. Also I am learning how close to put plants to a Prickly Ash. The Indians called this tree the "Tooth-Ache tree" and used the bark for such purposes. Take a knife and cut a very small piece of bark and place under your tongue and you'll find out why. I wonder if the roots do that to rose plants? Or do they just rob them of moisture? Some native trees will put a poison to keep other growths from growing too close therefore taking needed moisture away.

There is always some kind of project in process here and I find I will never be too old to learn something new.

The native plants, bushes, trees, and ponds are what made a bird sanctuary possible. Serenity Pond is certified with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and The National Wildlife Federation. It is possible to live in harmony with nature and still have a few gardens.

If you wish to walk the paths of Serenity Pond you may phone for an appointment: 979-589-2314. The Texas Rose Rustlers are welcomed to take cuttings.



MANURE MADNESS

By Lucille Idom

I was asked to write about our method of fertilizing roses. "Ha ha ha ha ha!" I laughed hysterically, "Method, I have no method." When the moon is full, I get these urges and - oops wait a minute, that is another story - one I don't want to see in print.

Now, where was I? Oh yes, fertilizing the roses. Most of the time Mayo makes up the formula Mike Herr gave us and feeds everything about once a month. We have a lot of fun when we start to feed the plants. We occasionally go out and hurl dry stuff at the plants (it's leftover stuff we find in the garage). It usually goes like this, (Mayo) "Hey, look what I found on a shelf, it says seaweed - is that good for the roses?" (Lucille) "Yes it is and here is a box of Epsom Salts, sprinkle that around on the ground and water it in. Let's see now what does this label say, brewers yeast, throw these tablets around out there, couldn't hurt and while you are at it throw this bone meal around, they say it is good to deter snails." We often find granite sand, bone meal, greensand, cottonseed meal and alfalfa pellets in small amounts that have been left over from our formula mix. We also bury banana skins in the rose bed - potassium you know. If you have something that has not bloomed, put a little sprinkling of bat guano around it and that dude will bloom.

(Mayo) "Those people who raise quails said we could clean out from under their cages if we wanted to - have to compost it for awhile though." (Lucille) "OK, let's go - I'll take anything that's free." We get on our oldest clothes and shoes, load up shovels and bags and head for the quail pens. Folks if you are not serious about working for your manure, don't even think about cleaning quail pens. This is hard work and you should wear a mask and like to shovel. ☺ I hold the sacks open for Mayo to fill, we load the sacks on the truck and head for home. We can't get into our back yard with the truck so we have to use a wheelbarrow to get everything to the back of the lot. We are very dedicated manure handlers and can envision what all this smelly stuff is going to do for our plants. After all, we keep telling ourselves, you can't buy stuff like this. ☺ The neighbors stand around in their yards trying to act like they are not watching us but we know they are. They are saying to themselves, "There go those crazy neighbors working their fool heads off shoveling that manure around the yard again. When are they going to stop." ☺

We have some pretty good adventures hunting free manure for our garden. Mayo had a friend once who offered to let him clean some fresh manure out of his chicken pens. Mayo could drive to the back of our lot then so he drove to the back and started unloading. I mean, this stuff is so hot it's smoking and it smells to high Heaven. All of a sudden we hear windows slamming shut and see blinds being drawn and all the neighbors have disappeared into their houses. Well, some people just don't appreciate anything, do they? All we are trying to do is beautify the neighborhood. Anyhow, we put a load of pine bark on top of that hot stuff and when we went out there a few days later, it looked like a volcano had erupted. That hot manure had turned the bark to ashes and was pouring out the top of the pile. We realized none of our neighbors had been coming to the fence to talk to us lately and now we knew why. We quickly threw some more bark and leaves on the pile until it quit smelling and let it compost for a long time. The neighbors paid us many compliments on our yard and garden the next year when we used the well-rotted compost. ☺ We just thanked them, smiled mysteriously and pretended not to know how they had acted the year before.

Rosie (our Toy Fox Terrier) likes to follow us around when we use Soil Food from Gardenville because it is these small little pellets that have molasses, bat guano and other yummy things in it. She thinks it makes a great dessert and makes a game of dashing around and snacking on a pellet or two before I can catch her. ☺ You only have to use this twice a year (February and October) on the lawn but it can be used more often on the flower garden.

Here is Mike Herr's grow formula

1/4 cup Seaweed Concentrate
2-4 Tbsp. Blackstrap Molasses
2 Tbsp. Superthrive
1 cup Medina Plus
1 cup Organic Life from Gardenville

Pour all in a 1 quart hose-end sprayer and fill up with water. Water your plants just like you do with Miracle Grow

Well, I hear Mayo from the deck saying, "I'm going to spray some Miracle Grow on the tomatoes so I'll just go ahead and use what's left on everything else." Hey, the roses and other flowers love it.

By the way, Mayo found some more room for a small daylily bed next to our garage. ☺

BACK ISSUES OF OTR:

1982: _Sept. _Dec	1990: _Win. _Spr. _Sum. _Fall	1998: _Win. _Spr. _Sum. _Fall
1983: _May _July _Sep. _Dec.	1991: _Win. _Spr. _Sum. _Fall	1999: _Win. _Spr. _Sum. _Fall
1984: _May _Sep. _Dec.	1992: _Win. _Spr. _Sum. _Fall	2000: _Win. _Spr.
1985: _March _May _Sept. _Dec.	1993: _Win. _Spr. _Sum. _Fall	
1986: _May _Sep.	1994: _Win. _Spr. _Sum. _Fall	
1987: _Win. _Spr. _Sum. _Pall	1995: _Win. _Spr. _Sum. _Fall	
1988: _Win. _Spr. _Sum. _Pall	1996: _Win. _Spr. _Sum. _Fall	
1989: _Win. _Spr. _Sum. _Fall	1997: _Win. _Fall(only)	

(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 = _____

