
The American Rose Society

Exhibitors Quarterly

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WELCOME!

I have been around for a long time and many of you know me, but for the rest of you, let me introduce myself.



I joined ARS way back in the late 60s. I served on the Board of Directors, served as Chairman of Judges, and Chairman of Consulting Rosarians, and was honored with the ARS Gold Medal. I have been writing about roses all along the way.

My husband, Tom, and I learned to exhibit by competing with the best – Frank Benardella, Ed Ward, and Dale Martin, just to name a few. We exhibited as a team in local, district and national shows for 25 years. We learned as we went and did well. We have many national trophies to our credit and even won a national Queen of Show. We earned more than 50 Queens over the years.

Seventeen years ago, Tom died and I have done my best to exhibit alone. It is difficult but I have had some success. I even accumulated a few more Queens.



In 1985, I edited the first issue of the Exhibitors Quarterly. The publication then evolved into the Rose Exhibitors' Forum (REF). Recently, there was no editor for some time. Jeff Wyckoff, ARS President, asked me to edit the publication again. I gave it some thought and it was hard to say "no". It was like my long lost baby was back. So I said "yes".

This decision is so recent that I am going to use this edition mainly as an introduction to what is planned and an opportunity for all of you to send me your ideas. You are welcome to share your exhibiting and growing knowledge along with show experiences. (even funny stories)

I'm sure you all have noticed how small our rose shows are getting with a lack of exhibitors. Rose shows are our very best advertisement to attract membership in ARS and our local societies. I want to help and encourage new exhibitors with a "Beginners Corner".

I hope to bring you interesting and informative articles from some of the most successful exhibitors. We can all share new ideas and opinions on new roses. I will try to bring you information on new roses, new solutions to insect and disease problems and new solutions to exhibitors' problems.

Let me hear from you – roseylou@aol.com





Vijaya and Satish receiving their seven national challenge class awards

PREPARING FOR A NATIONAL ROSE SHOW

By Satish Prabhu, South Carolina
CR, Master Consulting Rosarian, Hort. Judge

(A brief chronicle of what it takes. The results are in the proof of the pudding)

When roses are well taken care of, meeting all their needs for water, fertilizers and protection from diseases, pruning and deadheading, it is hard to think of “special” things you would do in preparing for a national convention. However, over the years, I have found a measure of success by making a few alterations when a national convention happens to fall on a date suitable for roses in South Carolina. It just might be a matter of doing everything a little more compulsively and consistently than our usual rose growing.

First and foremost, weather wise, the ideal time for a rose show for us is the second week of May and the second or third week of October. Trying for a show other than those dates can be a very frustrating experience. The weather turns very hot right after the third week of May and typically will stay hot until the latter part of September. The roses do very poorly if pruned for a September show, as the weather at pruning time would be frequently in low hundred degrees and nothing grows.

Pruning: In the spring, the goal of pruning is to keep the size of rose bushes under control, remove dead wood, and rejuvenate the bush. Typically, there is no penalty for pruning hard. How hard one prunes is essentially a matter of individual preference. However, the peak blooming date cannot be manipulated by much in the spring. If I prune a week or two later than usual, hoping to bring my roses into peak bloom for a show couple of weeks later than our usual peak time, I have noticed the bushes will be in a hurry to bloom and bloom they will, at their usual time, on shorter stems. That has to do with a particular factor which is the number of daylight hours multiplied by average daily temperatures. When that magic number is reached, the roses bloom.

Purpose of pruning roses in preparation for a fall show is to encourage long stems capable of bearing exhibition blooms, clear the center of the bushes, thin out crowded leaves for better air circulation and expose more stems to sunlight to encourage the bush to put forth new growth. I found removing approximately forty percent of stems and foliage gives me the best results. This applies only to healthy bushes with lots of canes and stems and foliage. For smaller bushes, I do try to conserve all foliage I can. Another goal of pruning for a fall show is to time the blooming cycle to peak right on time for the show. This can be done better in the fall than in the spring season. I have read in various articles on pruning for the fall shows, where it is recommended that you cut back just a couple of stems every two to three days so that the bush will produce roses over a protracted period of time. This does not work for me. Because the roses grow by apical dominance, when a couple of stems and canes are cut back, the sap is re-directed to the un-pruned highest tips with no activity on the stems that have been just pruned. This process continues until the last canes are cut back, thus finishing the pruning process. It is only then

that the bush starts to put forth new growth from tips of pruned stems and canes. I find better success when I prune back the entire bush at one time, cutting some back on freshly bloomed stems (consider deep dead-heading) and some on stems of previous generation. Never go down to last year's cane; doing so in the fall will frequently result in that cane going dormant or fail to put forth any new growth. I can usually get a spread of about ten to fourteen days on each bush thus pruned, some on the newest stems, and some on older stems.

As a practical matter, I do have to reduce the height of my bushes to four feet or less, so that when the blooms start to open, I can see the blooms with suitable form, etc. and also protect the blooms in a reasonable manner. This chore becomes extremely difficult when the buds are opening at a height of 8-10 ft! Depending on the original size of the bush, it is not uncommon for me to leave 15 to 20 stems after pruning. These are mostly bushes on Fortuniana root stock, but I do have several on own roots that perform equally well.

Water: Tune up the irrigation system. Broken parts are replaced and nozzles cleaned out for optimum performance. The in-line filters are taken out and cleaned as well. I run 800 sq. ft of bed space on each cycle for 15 minutes, water supplied by a 2 inch well (12 gallons per minute). This works out to be approximately 200 gallons, enough to saturate the soil for a depth of six inches or more. Roses are watered daily from the pruning date until the last show of fall season. It is important not to let the bushes suffer from heat stress/ lack of water because the quality of blooms will suffer if they are allowed to wilt or droop a few times during this period.

Fertilizer program includes a soil test to determine presence of any unusual problems. Lime is added if necessary to bring the pH to 6.5. Typically, I have needed about 5 lbs. per 100 square ft of soil surface, spring and fall. Application of organic materials starts with application of compost, choice depending upon availability and price. Compost is applied at the rate of 2 lbs per square foot, spread evenly and lightly worked into the soil. Then add about two cups of any commercially available "organic mix" (or mix your own). Most organic mixes have materials such as alfalfa meal, fish meal, cotton seed meal, and kelp. Some even contain Milorganite. For those of you, who might have an objection to using Milorganite for whatever reason, be aware "bio-solids" is a fancy term for the same thing contained in certain commercially available mixes. It is important to recognize that applying "organics" does not obviate the need for regular application of compost, because organics are nutrient dense and application of a few cups per bush will not provide enough substrate for soil organisms to thrive. It is necessary to add the compost to sustain the soil organic matter level, to promote microbial activity, and to help maintain porous, crumbly physical structure of healthy soil and maintain good tilth. Thus, if one has to choose between applying organic mix or compost, I would highly recommend going for the compost. I have used a program that includes use of organics, granular N.P.K and soluble fertilizers and fish emulsion/ kelp solution. Granular N.P.K is applied at the rate of 1.5 lbs per 100 square ft, twice a month. Please note that this is approximately half the amount of what is usually recommended at twice the frequency for a more evenly available fertility level. Sul-Po-Mag, gypsum (calcium sulfate) and magnesium sulfate are applied, each at the rate of 1.5 lbs per 100 sq. ft. per month. They are not applied all at once, but one at a time, in a rotation in successive weeks. Sul-Po-Mag helps keep the soil magnesium level in acceptable range a little bit longer than if applied as magnesium sulfur alone, as it is less soluble than the latter.

A soluble fertilizer such as Miracle Gro 15-30-15 is applied at the rate of 3 cups (one small packet of 8 contained in each ten pound box) per 400 square feet, twice a month, alternating with the granular fertilizer. Fish emulsion - Kelp mix is applied twice during each season, the first time two weeks after pruning and the second time when the buds are size of small peas. Sequestrene (chelated iron) is applied at the rate of two teaspoons per bush per month and Peter's soluble trace element mix at the rate of a

quarter teaspoon per bush per month. This completes the fertilizing program. I do not typically apply foliar spray of fertilizers for fear of burning the foliage in our hot weather.

If one fails to have great blooms after following a program like this faithfully, the following possibility should be considered: Root invasion in the rose beds, shifting sunlight or the reduction of sun light because of growing trees close by, failure of watering system with blocked nozzles, unexpected pH shifts and soil problems, altered or poor drainage etc. A soil test along with tissue analysis might be necessary to get to the root of the problem.

Disbudding: One should be looking for promising new growth and take time to make sure those new, fast growing stems have open space to grow and develop. Any old foliage that tends to crowd out the new growth and possibly cause unnecessary bending of new stems while seeking out sunlight should be cleared. Disbudding is performed regularly, and as early as possible. Leaving a small part of disbudded stem results in natural abscission of that remnant, which will turn yellow and fall off without leaving any scar. Growing buds should be carefully examined on a daily basis for eggs of bud worm and manually remove them. One can't rely on pesticides to address this problem as the little worms will not be killed until the eggs hatch and the worms bore a hole in the buds before ingesting the pesticide. A bloom can be totally destroyed with just one small hole, which will cause holes in many layers of the petals. Be on the look out for thrips that will damage white and pastel colored roses.

Bloom Protection: As the blooms start opening, each promising bloom is protected from rain, too much sun and the damaging winds. This is a three step process. First, the bush needs to be anchored firmly so that it will not sway too much in the winds. A stake anchors the individual stem carrying the bloom, so that it won't be damaged inside the protective device. Then, a protective device is mounted directly over the bloom. Since nothing of practical value is commercially available, we end up coming up with various devices. Prepare devices of your choice in sufficient numbers well in advance of a planned show. I have seen devices made of one gallon milk cartons, two liter soft drink bottles, pie plates and my own version of a five gallon water fountain jug, which I call the mother of all bottles. Do not get carried away, as it would take a lot of work to make, store, take down and clean these big devices and a lot of space to store about fifty of them, but they do work well. Two liter soft drink bottles or gallon plastic jugs are entirely adequate to do a fine job. Usually, one or two electrical conduit carriers are attached to the bottle, which can then be mounted on a conduit pipe. Hammer one end into a flat tip to prevent soil from getting in to the pipe, which makes it hard to re-use. Place these stakes and devices in the rose beds a few days before you actually need to use them, so that when the time comes, they can be easily and quickly installed in place.

Preventive spray program basically follows the Rosemania recommendations, using Banner Max alternating with Compass at 15 days intervals. Dithane, or Manzate used at three day intervals three times successively, whenever a little black spot is detected. At the earliest sign of spider-mites, washing the foliage with water wand is followed by Avid, alternating with Flora mite. Thrips are controlled by Conserve applied every three days according to package instructions. The ideal program should include meticulous, one hundred percent, timely dead heading and maintenance of good hygiene. Fallen petals should be picked up and discarded so that there are no large sources of botrytis spores waiting to jump on your blooms. Once infected, there is no cure for botrytis on your blooms. In the spring, one may also have to spray once or twice for powdery mildew.

Cutting the Bloom Finally, the exhibition blooms are cut when they are in the correct stage for exhibition. The "right" time will depend on your refrigeration and days to the show. We switched to the "Coolest Cooler" as originally suggested by Harold Baker (FL) and then popularized by Bob Lundberg (SC) a few years ago. We find that the roses stay fresher and hold form longer than when we used a florist cooler. One has to exercise patience and allow time for the blooms to develop into correct stage of

openness. Worries about a bloom blowing open are ill-founded as really fast blooming roses are clearly unsuitable for exhibiting. In fact, in varieties with many petals, the outer most layer of three petals will have to be removed when the bloom has developed to a stage of maximum beauty. Blooms forced open by artificial means on the show date after having cut the same before they are ready will never develop good form. We do not cut or carry more than four blooms at a time in a bucket, so as to avoid foliar damage from thorns of other stems. Each specimen is groomed as far as possible before placing them in the refrigerator. No bloom will be refrigerated without thoroughly cleaning the foliage. Failure to do this might cause problems at the prep table, when you are faced with having to clean foliage of some of your best specimens. We also try to carry just the required number of blooms with VERY FEW backups for the number of challenge classes we intend to enter. This is the summary of basic considerations for entering challenge classes in a national show.

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Note from the author: A brief history of exhibiting success of Vijaya and Satish Prabhu

One day in 1979, Vijaya saw a board proclaiming a “rose show” at a mall close by. She had to take a few roses that we grew in a coffee jar to see how our roses compared with those grown by the experts. When we returned that evening to check how they fared, we were recruited to join the greater Columbia Rose Society. Three years later, we would attend our very first national convention at Washington D.C. We actually knew very little about showing roses at that time. I was deeply impressed with the huge Earl of Warwick Urn, so much so that I started inquiring what one would have to do to win it! My initial inquiries with senior members in our district were met with some skepticism. All the same, I was told to plant some AARS roses and take good care of them. Two years later, we won our first Earl of Warwick Urn and later, three more times.

By steadily attending national conventions whenever we could, (some years, unsuitable show dates and some others, our work and family situations precluded our attending) we steadily won a trophy here and another one there, three trophies at one show being the most up to this year. In the spring show held at Shreveport LA, in 2010, we ended up with seven national trophies, the dowager and the heritage queens and the floribunda queen and court and a few other awards. These seven national trophies brought our total count to 39 trophies, second highest amongst active exhibitors as well as second all time. There are only three trophies which have eluded us so far- the Mavity and Eugene Pfister in the spring and the Horace Mc Farland in the fall. Except for those three, we have won every trophy offered, including the centennial trophy awarded only twice, spring and fall, of the centennial year.



JUDGING CHANGE NOTE: The word “miniflora” is now a generic term. Consequently, the word should be written “miniflora”, no hyphen, no capital, and no registered trademark symbol. Please check your schedules and, if necessary, update them for upcoming shows.

FRINGE BENEFITS OF EXHIBITING

By Louise Coleman



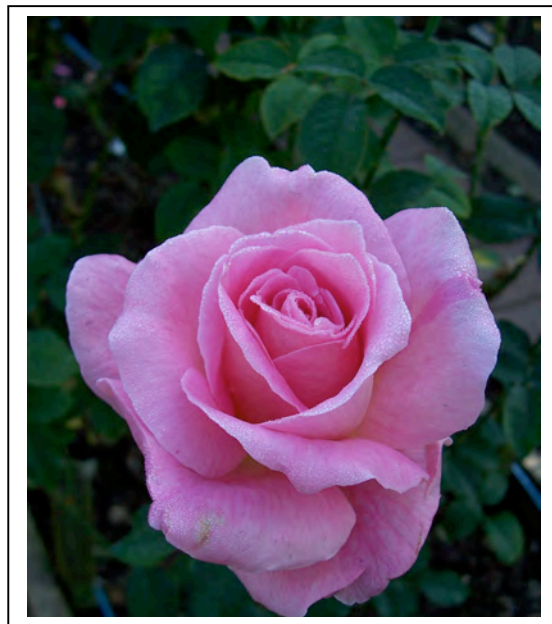
A marriage goes through many stages: The excitement of being newly-weds, the thrill of being new parents; the pride of children's successes, the satisfaction of a job well done when they leave the nest. These stages are more special because they are shared together.

Often when a man and his wife are back where they started, just the two of them again, there is nothing much to share together. Life seems a bit empty - he goes his way and she goes hers, meeting at meals. However, a couple that grow and show roses together, not only spend much time together, but get to share the excitement, the thrill, the pride and the satisfaction of achieving something beautiful together.

The suspense, the challenge and the thrill of victory are all motivation for exhibiting roses. The motivated exhibitors then become motivated growers in order to achieve their goal. When a couple is equally motivated exhibitors, by necessity, they spend many hours, planning and working together.

Think of the married couples you know that are not involved in rose growing and showing, how many of them spend a whole afternoon together? (on their knees, up to their elbows in weeds and dirt) How many of them spend time walking together in a rose garden? (examining each and every rose at least twice a day.). How many couples spend hours together in the twilight? (cleaning rose foliage.) How many couples are tender with each other? (removing rose thorns from each other's unreachable places)

How many spend a romantic evening together (stamping and filling out show tags) How many rise to share a lovely sun-rise? (on the road to a show). How many of those couples spend all day together with friends and having a great time? (at the rose show). How many get to share a special joy and happiness of a shared success? (“Honey, we won Queen!!”)



Century II

ARS NATIONAL CONVENTION

You still have plenty of time to register for the ARS National Convention in Atlanta, October 7-11. Atlanta is a great city, with lots to do and a wealth of historic sites. The Georgia and Deep South Rose Societies put together a great program of speakers and tours that should have something for everyone. It will be great fun.

Many districts also have fall conventions and shows. If you are a new member or you have never exhibited outside your own society's rose show, here is another opportunity to enter your roses. It will be a great experience to be in the preparation room with exhibitors from everywhere as they prepare their roses to show.

Conventions are a great way to connect with other rosarians and learn new things. Often, you also get to see the newest varieties.

It is a fun and rosy week-end and a chance to make new rose friends.



"Welcome Home"



THINGS TO COME

- In our next issue, there will be pictures and dialogue of the results of the ARS National show. We will hear from some of the winners plus an article from the Lundenburgs.
- I'll tell you how to "Fly Solo" exhibiting! Some things I had to learn myself.
- Tommy Cairns, a top exhibitor and past ARS President has agreed to do a column for this newsletter. We haven't decided just what the subject will be yet. But you can be sure it will be informative.

If YOU have any ideas, just let me know. This newsletter is by exhibitors for exhibitors!!! I hope to hear from all of you. If you are a beginner with questions, share them with us and we will **get** you answers. If you have a funny story or experience relating to a exhibiting, please share it with us. I will try to bring you information on new roses, judging changes, coming events for exhibitors.

SURVEY

As a beginning, here is a survey, **please participate.**

1. How many roses do you grow?
2. How many of each variety?
3. How long have you exhibited?
4. Besides your local show, how many shows do you enter each year?
5. What is your most dependable hybrid tea for show?
6. What is your most dependable floribunda for show?
7. What is your favorite collection (trophy) class
8. What do you think is your biggest problem with exhibiting
 - a. Timing cuts
 - b. When to cut blooms to show
 - c. Bloom protectors
 - d. Refrigeration
 - e. Transporting roses to the show
 - f. Grooming
 - g. Bloom selection for collections

Your responses will help me to gather the information for this newsletter that is important to you, so you can become a better exhibitor. E-mail roseylou@aol.com.

