



Rose Ramblings

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OCTOBER 2009

The Joy of Growing Show Roses

By Suzanne M. Horn, ladyredlhw@aol.com

I have been growing roses for exhibition in Glendale, California, since the year 2000 when I was gifted with my first miniature rose on Valentine's Day. Growing roses is not as difficult as people have been led to believe. Our roses will keep growing and blooming even if we neglect them. However, it didn't take me long to realize I wanted to make show business out of growing roses and become an exhibitor. To do that I would need to raise the level of my game and aspire to a level of excellence. With the guidance of some wonderful mentors like Bob Martin and Lynn Snetsinger, along with a willingness to work hard and give it my all, I have experienced a lot of joy, not to mention success.

I have found the joy is in the process as well as the result. From a horticultural standpoint, growing great exhibition roses is an ongoing educational experience and a journey of discovery. I recall once asking Bob Martin about his feeding program. He replied that he could share with me programs he had used in the past, but that every year he was tweaking and changing his program to try to obtain a better result. Now I understand what he meant, as I do the very same thing. I will never know everything there is to learn about this fascinating hobby, and that is part of the fun in this continuing adventure. I will always be a humble student of the rose and will continue to learn as long as I keep that fact in mind. Once I start thinking I know it all, my learning experience has ended. As a great philosopher once said, "The journey is the destination." For me, the joy is in the learning as

much as in the beautiful results.

I try to incorporate everything I learn into my program of growing roses. I have found that if I do even one good thing for my roses every day, they will get better and better, and the roses will reward me many times over for any effort put into their well being. I don't have to incorporate everything I learn all at once. However, once I am able to include something new into my program, it becomes part of my habitual routine. Of special note,

I have learned that habit is my best friend. As the Nike commercial says, "Just do it." I never ask myself if I feel like watering or feeding or spraying or disbudding. I just automatically do it because it's part of my program. Just imagine if we asked ourselves every morning we got up, "Do I really want to go to work today?" How many of us would still be gainfully employed?

That being said, let me share with you some of the useful information I have

picked up along the way and what I do to obtain optimal results in producing great roses for the shows. I happen to grow all 450 of my show roses in large containers. The hybrid teas and even many minis are grown in 25-gallon containers. However, I find the same basic horticultural practices apply to container-grown plants as to roses grown in the ground. Therefore, rather than going into specifics about container gardening, which is another whole article, I will discuss techniques that work with all rose growing applications.

Needless to say, the first thing we need to do is



Scottsdale trophy 2003. Photo by John Mattia

grow excellent plants. We've all heard that the three most important factors in the real estate market are "location, location and location." Well, it has also been said that the three most important factors in growing great show roses are "water, water and water." Make sure your roses are well hydrated, particularly during the hot summer months. Here in Southern California we are faced with drought conditions, and many areas are rationing water. This of course is another entire article, but in short, I ration everywhere but my roses. I make sure to water deeply at least once a week supplemented by periodic lighter waterings. One deep watering is better than several light waterings, as it encourages roots to grow downward and away from the sun and elements. Early morning watering is best to reduce evaporation, particularly in times of conservation.

One tip I can offer is this--I mix "water-holding crystals" in with the soil toward the root zone in order to maximize the results of my watering. The crystals retain water in the soil longer by storing 200 times their weight in water. Water-holding crystals are best used in sandy soil, and not in clay. The substance is also environmentally friendly, which is always a plus.

Next to water in importance is proper nutrition. Like most exhibitors, I utilize a combination of organic and chemical fertilizers to achieve optimum health for the most perfect show roses. I spare no expense when it comes to my roses. Two or three times a year I apply an organic, time-release compound (Dr. Earth Rose & Flower Food) containing nutrients that feed the soil. Many rosarians like to create their own organic mix. I prefer to let the experts do the chemistry, so I apply a commercially available product containing ingredients such as fish meal, kelp meal, alfalfa meal, and cottonseed meal. My best product recommendations are Dr. Earth Rose & Flower Food, Mills Magic Mix, Whitney Farms Organics and E.B. Stone Organics.

Since my roses are in containers, I use a potting soil containing good organic ingredients like sphagnum peat moss, humus, bat guano, and worm castings. Whether roses are in the ground or in containers, the soil should be amended periodically with good organic matter such as chicken manure, fish meal, and kelp meal. I apply organic matter regularly to feed the soil and help break down fertilizer into a form the roses can use. Organic materials in the soil also help retain water, lower pH in alkaline soil and slowly release their nutrients to the plants.



Suzanne won queen, king, and princess of miniatures with the roses Fairhope, Nancy Jean, and June Laver. Photo by Kitty Belendez.

Fish meal is a product I use throughout the year. It is 100% organic, enriches the soil, and feeds for an extended period of time. Furthermore, it contains primary nutrients and micronutrients; and it is also people and pet safe. Dr. Earth, Growmore, E.B. Stone and Whitney

Farms make excellent fish meal products. I also feed fish emulsion numerous times during the year, and my roses thank me for it. It contains low nitrogen with trace elements and can be fed throughout the growing season. Seaweed products are also beneficial and are available as a liquid feed or a foliar feed. A top choice of exhibitors is a product called Response, which is applied as a foliar feed as part of their spray program.

I am also a fan of products containing mycorrhizae, beneficial soil fungi that tend to improve the initial root growth of roses by increasing the uptake of water and fertilizer. I either apply mycorrhizae directly to the root zone when planting or utilize potting soil and organic fertilizers containing mycorrhizae. This is an optional additive, since mycorrhizae is a naturally occurring fungal ingredient in the soil. Roses without it will begin to produce it in the soil. They will catch up with the others treated with mycorrhizae within six months or so. However, I am an "instant gratification" kind of girl and so choose to use it in my program.

During certain times of the year, usually leading up to show season, I incorporate well-balanced

Rose Ramblings

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Monthly meetings of the San Diego Rose Society are held on the third Monday of each month at 7:30 PM in room 101 of the Casa del Prado in Balboa Park, excepting in July and August, or as otherwise announced in the Rose Ramblings or the Sunday Homescape Datebook of the San Diego Union-Tribune.

Annual Membership dues are \$15 on an email electronic PDF file format and \$25 USPS per calendar year per person or household. Send dues with name(s), address, including zip + 4, and telephone number to San Diego Rose Society Membership, P O Box 86124, San Diego CA 92138-6124.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER 3, 2009

EAST COUNTY ROSE
SHOW
Barona Convention Center
Lakeside, CA

Info: Sandy Campillo
Email: s.campillo@cox.net
Kristi Sutherland
Email: ksuthe4187@aol.com

OCTOBER 17 – 18, 2009

L.A. ROSE SOCIETY,
ROSE SHOW
AND ROSE FESTIVAL
Descanso Gardens, La
Canada, CA

Info: Alice Hart –
foodforfilm@pacbell.net
OR Marcia Sanchez-Walsh
(818) 395-0840

OCTOBER 19, 2009

S.D. ROSE SOCIETY
MEETING
Rm #101 Casa del Prado,
Balboa Park
6:30 Pot Luck
7:30 Meeting and Speaker

OCTOBER 24 – 25, 2009

ORANGE COUNTY ROSE
SHOW
Roger's Gardens – Corona
del Mar, CA

Info: Jan Brider
janbrider@earthlink.net

NOVEMBER 7, 2009

SANTA CLARITA ROSE
SHOW

Wm. E. Hart Park
Info: Kitty Belendez-
rosetxckb@aol.com

NOVEMBER 11 – 15, 2009

2009 ARS FALL
NATIONAL CONFERENCE
AND ROSE SHOW.

Rose Show is Friday, Nov.
13.

Doral Desert Princess Resort
Palm Springs, CA.

Info: www.desertrosesociety.com

Show schedule is now in this
website

Congratulations, Dick

Dick Streeper will be honored by the Friends of Balboa Park at their Millennium Awards Luncheon on October 27. He will be named as one of five Inspiration Award recipients. Dick is being recognized for forty years of dedication to the Inez Grant Parker Memorial Rose Garden.

He began this project when he was president of the San Diego Rose Society in 1969. At that time he had the ear of some of the park and city council people, and he worked with them for five years realizing the dream of the garden in 1974. Since then he has volunteered his time to advise about the garden's care. He arranges for new rose varieties to be donated each year to keep the garden fresh. In recent years he has formed and supervised the Rose Garden Corps, a group of dedicated volunteers who keep the garden tidy and healthy. The garden has been recognized by the World Federation of Rose Societies as one of the twelve best rose gardens in the world.

Rozluvr's Report

Roger English, President, rozluvr@cox.net

Envoy--that's what I'm feeling at this time for all of you growing roses near the coast. July, August and the first five days of September have been exceptionally hot in my intermediate climate zone about 10-12 miles inland. Temperatures have ranged between 90-100 with only occasional readings in the high 80s. Much of the time it has been a scorching 95-100. Rosarians living in the inland valleys relate that this summer has not been hotter than usual. Most summers the temperature in my area has been reliably about halfway between that of the predicted coastal and inland valley readings. For the summer of 2009 the daily readings here have been about equal to the inland valleys. My hybrid teas grow in a canyon amphitheater

facing west with no shade and heat-reflecting concrete block walls. In spite of keeping the soil adequately moist, many roses have scorched leaves. The roses have not gotten any food in July or August because of the concern that this would encourage more new leaf growth that would be scorched. Rose feeding in my garden routinely stops in the first week of October. Not this year. I want to enjoy hybrid tea blooms that haven't been dwarfed by the heat. The plan is to do a light pruning of hybrid teas from September 15 to 25 and fertilize them into the first week of November. Hopefully we will experience cooler weather and there will be a nice bloom cycle in early to mid- November. Hope you all have beautiful fall blooms.

The Joy of Growing Show Roses *continued from page 2*

chemical fertilizers into my organic feeding program. Although not as beneficial for your soil as organics and counterproductive to your mycorrhizae colony, chemical fertilizers cannot be distinguished from organics by your roses. Fertilizers are all chemicals to them, and they do not care about the source of their food. Chemical fertilizers give roses a specific shot in the arm when they need it, such as heavy nitrogen for stem and foliage growth, and a fertilizer higher in phosphorus later in the cycle to improve bloom size and quality. My friend Bob Martin often says, "The best fertilizer is the one that's on sale," again making the point that it's all about chemistry. I do have some favorites to recommend; and they include Magnum Grow, Max Sea, Peters 20-20-20 and Miracle-Gro for Roses. Ultimately, however, the brand name is not as important as the ingredients. Read the label.

Another must for your feeding program is magnesium sulfate, commonly known as Epsom salts. It stimulates new basal growth, promotes healthy foliage and strengthens the crowns of the plants. I incorporate it into my feeding program a number of times a year. Since I feed my roses out of a 55-gallon drum using a submersible pump (often called a "sump pump"), I just add the requisite amount to the mix periodically when I am feeding the roses. A tip when doing this is to dissolve the Epsom salts in a bucket of hot water and stir until the crystals have dissolved before adding them to the tank mix. This will ensure they are evenly distributed to the roses and do not gather at the bottom of the tank in a clump. Another option is to sprinkle it around the drip line of the plant and water it

in.

Mulching is also of great benefit to the roses. Mulch improves water retention in the soil, and it keeps roses warmer in winter and cooler in summer. Rosarians have many different materials from which to select when it comes to mulch. My mulch of choice is aged horse manure from a local stable. It can often be obtained for free if you have a truck at your disposal. I like to store it in 13-gallon trash bags for use throughout the year, particularly as a topping when I transplant roses. Other options to horse manure include chicken manure and a longtime favorite, Kellogg's Gromulch. Just make sure you choose an organic mulch that will break down over time to enrich the soil.

From time to time, I utilize products advertised to be magic potions designed to produce extra special results such as Superthrive, Liquid Karma and Jump Start. Superthrive is a synthetic vitamin hormone supplement, stress reducer and growth stimulant. Jump Start and Liquid Karma are superconcentrates of vitamins, minerals and micronutrients. I don't know how much they actually help, but they certainly can't hurt. Often I am not sure exactly which additive has produced an excellent result I see. A good idea is to divide your plants into two groups, one utilizing the additive you are testing and the other without it to determine how well it is working.

Another important consideration in maintaining plant health is disease control. Being a serious exhibitor, I have zero tolerance for disease or pests during show

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MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

DATE: OCTOBER 19, 2009 (3RD MONDAY.

TIME AND PLACE: 6 TO 9:00PM IN ROOM 101 OF THE CASA DEL PRADO.

POTLUCK DINNER AT 6:00PM. PLEASE BRING A DISH TO SHARE AS FOLLOWS: LAST NAME BEGINNING WITH:

A-G: DESSERT

H-R: MAIN DISH

S-Z: SALAD OR SIDE DISH

BRING YOUR OWN UTENSILS AND A SERVING UTENSIL FOR YOUR SHARED DISH.

LITTLE ROSE SHOW: 7PM-7:30PM. BRING YOUR BLOOMS TO SHARE.

FUTURE MEETINGS IN ROOM 101 OF THE CASA DEL PRADO:

November 16, 2009

Our October meeting will be a busy one! First, we will have our semi-annual potluck dinner. Please bring a dish that will serve eight, along with a serving utensil and your own plate and flatware. Drinks will be provided.

In addition, **all attendees** should bring at least **one rose bloom**. One bloom each will be used during part of the evening's program. Those who wish to enter our "Little Rose Show" may bring more roses so you can practice your skill at displaying entries in a show setting. Even if you never plan to exhibit, the tricks of "staging" you will learn will help you to show your roses at home in different and perhaps more pleasing ways! If you have never done this before, there will be experts on hand to assist you. Be sure to cut blooms that are fresh and about 1/3 to 1/2 open, depending on how far ahead of time you cut. For large roses, stems should be in proportion to the bloom, but usually about 18" for a smaller bloom and 24" for a larger one. They can always be shortened. Smaller roses, like miniatures or old garden roses that have short stems, may only be a few inches tall. Be sure your leaves are free of dust, if you get a chance ahead of time, by wiping them clean with a small piece of paper towel or, my favorite, a small section of a woman's hose. You will be amazed at how shiny this makes the leaves! Showing off our blooms is great fun.

Meanwhile, the balance of the evening will be spent in two activities. We will have a period of time for questions and answers on rose care, fertilization, soils or whatever you can think of. Consulting rosarians will be on hand to respond. Our main event will be "Show and Tell," an opportunity to share your favorite rose and tell us about yourself and your garden. We are so excited to have over 100 new members from the Del Mar Fair, most of whom we do not know. This is the time to meet them as well as get to know the rest of us better.

Now, the rose you bring for "Show and Tell" doesn't have to be your most favorite rose. It could also be the most unusual, the largest or smallest or tallest. Or, it could just be the one that is blooming on October 19. We love ALL roses and we are thankful that we have so many rose enthusiasts in our group who share this love. We look forward to a good turnout for this meeting. Be sure to call if you are in need of a ride! I can be reached at 760-317-5894 or by cell, 602-430-6941. See you there!

Meet THE David Austin!

By Sue Streeper, streeper@cox.net

David Austin, originator of the famous David Austin English Roses, is this year's honoree at the Huntington Library's Great Rosarians of the World (GROW). What you may not know is that David Austin rarely leaves England and almost never accepts invitations to appear at events like this. It is truly a coup that Clair Martin of the Huntington has persuaded him to come.

Here is the schedule of events for the weekend that David Austin will be at the Huntington in San Marino:

Saturday, January 23, 2010

11:30-4:30	Exhibits on photography, rare rose books, rose fragrances
1:00-2:45	Rose propagation workshop
2:45-3:30	Rose propagation workshop repeated
4:30-9:00	Reception, buffet dinner, program by Stephen Scanniello

Sunday, January 24, 2010

10:30	Panel discussion
11:45	Lunch
12:30	Panel discussion
2:00	GROW presentation—David Austin
3:45	Reception

If you love Austin English roses, you will want to meet the man who created them. For costs and how to order tickets, go to <http://greatrosarians.com/weblog/?p=2186>.

If there is interest among the members of the San Diego Rose Society to charter a bus for a one-day trip to the Austin event, contact Dick Streeper at 619 448 0321 or streeper@cox.net.

About

Basic

Care

Fall Feeding and Control of Pests and Pestilence

By ARS consulting rosarians—
Gary Bulman, gossbulman@cox.net
Doug Kalal, kalal5@sbcglobal.net,
www.sdgreatgardens.com
Roger English, ro_luvr@cox.net

Rose Ramblings: *What is your advice regarding pests and fungal disease in the fall?*

Doug: Instead of using the usual chemicals, consider using an organic method of pest and disease control. Try insecticidal soap for rinsing those critters off the foliage. Use a water wand to blast out the middle of the bush. If rust appears, remove those leaves immediately. The bush will grow new ones. Also make sure to clean up any fallen foliage because spores from rust and mildew can be having a party down there.

Roger: Powdery mildew becomes a bigger threat as soon as the weather cools in the fall. Resumption of your usual routine to prevent powdery mildew is advised. Caterpillars are at their peak in my garden in the fall and do considerable damage to leaves and buds. Spinosad is the most effective agent for killing this pest and will be used every 1-2 weeks. It will also control rose slugs. Compass and BannerMaxx sprays will be alternated every 1-2 weeks for excellent prevention of powdery mildew and rust.

Gary: Fall presents a time of cooler temperatures and is a great time for the growth of roses. Our vigilance for the control of powdery mildew must continue. I recommend spraying a minimum of every two weeks for control. Coastal areas and even inland climates will again be visited by the marine layer, causing mist and moist, cloudy conditions which will no doubt be followed by warm days which are the ideal conditions for mildew. General pests such as aphids and spider mites are less of a problem than during the spring and summer but I include Conserve (Spinosad) in my spray program to combat rose slugs and leafhoppers. I continue to recommend an inspection of the rose garden late in the evening with a flashlight to determine what bugs are doing damage. I found rose weevils feasting on the outer petals of my white and light-colored blooms in June and July during my late night routine. They have since disappeared but who knows what will move in next. Be vigilant.

Rose Ramblings: *What will be your feeding program for October and November this year?*

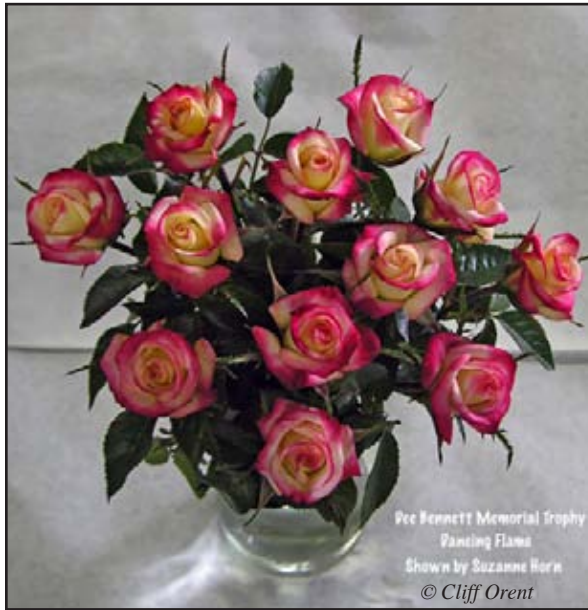
Doug: By October I am trying to shut down the roses so I just give one last feeding of Dr. Earth rose food by the middle of October. I do this because I want my roses to be dormant by Christmas so that I can get all of my pruning done before the kids go back to school in mid-January. One very important thing to remember in October is to keep hydrating your roses to keep them alive when the Santa Ana winds return.

Roger: Fierce and persistent heat this summer in my garden 10-12 miles from the coast has caused the hybrid tea blooms to be quite small and the plants to be less vigorous than usual. Because of this and the ARS National Rose Show on November 13, my usual light summer pruning in mid-August has been changed to mid-September. I am looking forward to the beauty of full-sized blooms. Feeding will be with Magnum Grow weekly until one week before the show.

Gary: During early October I will start reducing the fertilization of my roses to begin readying them for the November/December slowdown and eventual pruning in December/January. There is an exception to my normal routine this year because of an ARS National Rose Show in our backyard in Palm Springs November 11-15. Many of our San Diego county rose growers will attend and hope to bring quality blooms for this show. Due to this, many of my roses will be called upon to produce a bevy of special blooms worthy of a trip to Palm Springs. These plants will be fed an additional portion of Ada Perry fertilizer as well as generous portions of alfalfa tea fortified with fish emulsion and Liquinox Bloom (0-10-10) to hopefully enhance the color and quality of the blooms. At the conclusion of the national show it will be back to cutting fertilization and reducing water which I hope will trick the roses into a semi-dormant state.

season. Unfortunately, many of the best show roses are not disease resistant. Therefore, I spray my roses whenever necessary to get clean roses to a show. I spray fungicide (alternately Compass and Banner Maxx, available from rosemania.com) preventatively and insecticide only when I see a problem. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure when it comes to powdery mildew, the bane of my garden. Of note, I spray only during show season for six to eight weeks in the spring and the fall. For the rest of the year, my garden is "earth kind."

Lastly, I suggest you take the time to get to know each of your roses intimately. I do this by making daily trips through the garden to observe and do little chores. I usually walk my garden every morning and every evening, and also hand water my roses. Not only do I get an opportunity



Dee Bennett Memorial Trophy: Dancing Flame

to appreciate the beauty of the roses, I get to know the special needs of all the individual varieties. I also get to spot the need for weeding, disbudding, deadheading, the removal of suckers, canes needing to be staked or tied up, mulch levels getting low, and the beginning signs of disease or insect problems to be averted. You'll find there is always something more you can do to increase the beauty and health of your roses on a leisurely stroll through your garden.

Bob Martin once wrote, "Roses reward you in proportion to your effort."

Let me encourage you to make that effort and go the extra mile for your roses. Whether or not you choose to exhibit, your work and dedication will produce splendor in your garden. I wish you joy on the journey and beautiful results.

A "Date" in Palm Springs

By Sue Streeper, streeper@cox.net

The dates to save on your calendar are November 11-15, coming up fast. We seldom have the opportunity to attend an American Rose Society convention within driving distance of San Diego. But this fall we do, and it is our excuse to spend a few special days in the exciting resort area of Palm Springs.

You won't want to miss highlights of the convention including the rose show, outstanding speakers, tours, and an Ikebana seminar. You can exhibit your roses in the show by driving to Palm Springs either the afternoon of November 12 or early in the morning of November 13. Outstanding programs will be presented by such luminaries as Tom Carruth of Weeks Roses, Jeff Wyckoff who is the new president of ARS, and our own Bob Martin. Tours are always a favorite feature of national conventions, and there are five to choose from at the Palm Springs event. For those interested in rose arrangements, there is a two-day post-convention Ikebana seminar on November 16 and 17.

All events will be held at the Doral Desert Princess Resort. Now is the time to call the hotel (760-322-7000) to reserve your room at the special convention rate. And don't forget to register for exhibiting roses and attending meals and tours. All the details can be found in the May/June issue of *The American Rose*, pages 62 to 68, and online at www.desertrosesociety.com.

Ralph Moore Dies

Ralph Moore, known around the world as the "father of miniature roses," died on September 14, 2009. Ralph was born in Visalia, California, on January 14, 1907, and lived his life there. From early youth he was interested in roses and in 1937 he founded Sequoia Nursery with \$800 and a dream. He was interested in creating all sorts of new plant types, including roses. He discovered that by using certain species and types of small rose varieties, he could create profound changes in a short time span and thus was created the miniature rose. He soon became the world's leader in miniature roses, a position he retained until retirement at age 101 in 2008.

Rose of the Month—Black Magic

By Geri McCarron, amgm1431@pacbell.net

Black Magic casts its enchantment in a variety of ways: one is that its perfect symmetry deepens its impact when it is presented in a grouping such as a box, bouquet or vase. It blooms so generously, and with such long stems that it makes large bouquets easy to gather. The most beautiful floral gift that I ever gave to anyone was a vase of 36 of these.

Because of its great petal substance, this rose is easy to shape. One can move the petals with the fingertips and easily sculpt the blooms to a desired shaping for show or floral arrangement. It makes a very challenging entry in any show class that calls for a grouping, and it often makes the trophy court as a single bloom, though it is a little small to win a lot of queens.

Color and shading combine to make its most appealing aspect, its color, a very velvety dark red which can turn bright red in late summer. Its seasonal variations bring up an important point about garden changes. Different gardeners grow this rose differently at different times of the year. A rose that doesn't look great in April may be awesome in October in the same garden.

In singing the praises of any rose, I think it's fair to note that one should allow for its "off" days, too. After a period of continued rainy weather this rose is not a beauty—it turns black and brownish. One rainy

December several friends formed a marching drill team for the Doo Dah Parade, and presented themselves as the "Dead Rose Queens." This rose provided positively ghoulish black/brown bouquets for the occasion. In the first spring bloom it gets an odd scarring on the canes, and its form is confused; however, its summer and autumn beauty is worth the wait.



Black Magic. Photo by Barbara Lester.



Black Magic English Box grown by Carl Mahanay. Photo by Barbara Lester.

A tall plant, it produces a lot of canes, hence, a lot of blooms. San Diego County nurseries stock it, and it grows strong quickly. I recommend it when friends ask for a name of a rose plant they could give as a gift. When someone sees a single bloom and asks me the name and I reply "Black Magic," the usual response is, "Good name for it!"

FREE NEWSLETTER EXCHANGE

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