



**VCRS Meets at 5100 Adolfo Rd, Camarillo CA**

**Visit our Website at  
[www.venturarose.org](http://www.venturarose.org)**

## **This Month's Meeting Presentation**

### **January's Presentation**

**“.....Winter Protection for Roses.....”**

Thursday, January 24th, 2008

Little rose show at 7pm. Speaker Presentation at 7:30pm

### **Ventura County Rose Society Rosarians**

Our January meeting will feature a presentation  
on “Winter Protection for Roses”  
by three of our own expert members:  
Dawn-Marie Johnson, Hetty Shurtleff, and Bud Jones.

Refreshments for January

Paddy Ruzella\* Dawn-Marie Johnson\*Connie Estes

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## January's Speaker Presentation

Speaker Biographies

### Winter Protection of Roses

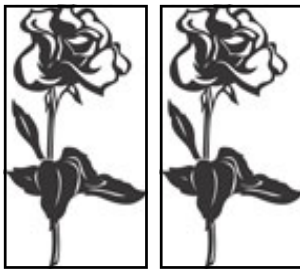
Our January meeting will feature a presentation on "Winter Protection for Roses" by three of our own expert members: Dawn-Marie Johnson, Hetty Shurtleff, and Bud Jones.

**Dawn-Marie Johnson** has been a Ventura County Rose Society (VCRS) member for 11 years and has served in many positions including President, Vice President, and Secretary as well as Consulting Rosarian Liaison, and was awarded the Bronze Medal of Honor by the VCRS for dedicated service in 2004. She has also been active in promoting and participating in many of the Society's activities including the VCRS Celebration of Roses, the VCRS Auction, the VCRS bus tours, as well as hosting the VCRS Social this past summer. Dawn-Marie is an award-winning exhibitor and grows several hundred roses, including hybrid teas, floribundas, shrubs, minis, and climbers, with emphasis on roses that are fragrant and good for cutting. She has given many talks on rose care to groups around the area and will lead off the presentation at the January meeting with a discussion of clean up of the winter garden and organic dormant spraying.

**Hetty Shurtleff** is a gardener's gardener! In addition to the hundreds of roses she grows in her gardens in Santa Barbara, she also grows a great number of annuals and perennials, arranged in artistic and striking combinations among her roses and throughout her garden. Hetty's roses include modern hybrid teas, floribundas, and climbers as well as Old Garden Roses, and admits she loves all roses. She "cannot pass a nursery without checking it out," and also buys from catalogues and online nurseries. She adds to her growing collection of roses by collecting cuttings of roses no longer available in commerce, found roses, as well those from others' gardens (always with permission). Hetty is an award-winning exhibitor who also makes many of her own ceramic vases and is currently President of the Las Floralias arrangement group in Santa Barbara. Hetty has been a member of both the Santa Barbara Rose Society (SBRS) and the Ventura Country Rose Society for approximately 16 years and will be giving a demonstration on how to grow roses from cuttings, at which she is a well-known expert.

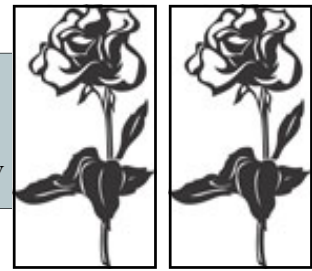
**Bud Jones** has been a member of the Santa Barbara Rose Society since 1982 and the Ventura County Rose Society for over 15 years. He is a Consulting Rosarian, ARS Horticultural Judge, and has judged at many local, district and national rose shows. He recently completed a three-year term as the Chairman of Judges for the Pacific Southwest District, an area covering Southern California, Southern Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona, and Western Texas. He has also received the Bronze Honor Medal by the Santa Barbara Rose Society for years of dedicated service. Bud has spoken at numerous local rose societies on a variety of topics covering all aspects of rose growing. Along with Sue Diller, he has also assisted the VCRS for years in reviewing, critiquing and giving us pointers on our rose contributions to the "Mini-Rose Show" at monthly meetings. Bud lives in Santa Barbara with his wife, Kay, a fellow SBRS and VCRS member and "a lover of plants," whom he credits with getting him interested in roses many years ago. Their garden is a beautiful example of their love of roses (HT's, floribundas, shrubs, miniatures and Bud's favorites--OGR's, climbers, and tree roses), succulents, fruit trees, flowering, tropical plants and unusual garden art. Bud is also an award-winning exhibitor. Bud will discuss the benefits and potential drawbacks on mulch, including different types and when to apply them.

The evening will be both fun and enlightening, and we look forward to seeing you all there!



## Five Observations on Pruning Roses

By Jim Delahanty



More people exhibit angst about pruning roses than growing them. And otherwise sensible people invest more time, trouble and research into pruning roses than in seeking a mate. Demonstrations on pruning roses are so popular and valued that some groups charge fees for attending such events. The distress and anxiety with which many people approach pruning is not inexplicable. The problem is not with the rose, but the pruner. Below are a few considerations to tame the psychological pruning beast, at least over the next few months.

**Firstly.** Roses are tough. The angst and anxiety over pruning is a confession of personal inadequacy, not any inadequacy of the rose. Roy Hennessey, plantsman extraordinaire of the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, headed his newspaper columns with the observation that you could do ANYTHING to a rose, except grub it up out of the ground and leave it there, and it would thrive. This is pretty much true. Pruning roses within an inch of their lives does not prevent them from recovering and blooming; a famous award winning rosarian in southern California never pruned his roses at all. A prominent Bay area rosarian spends five seconds on each rose with his chainsaw. Roses have been in existence for over 35 million years and in most of that time, no one pruned anything unless the forest were burned to a crisp, nature's rather non-specific pruning method.

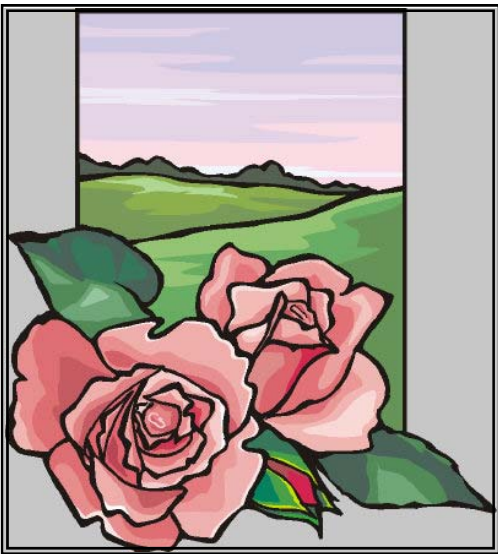
**Secondo.** Much of our pruning has evolved because of human concerns, not because of the need of the rose per se. While some roses need to have pruning utilized to stimulate growth—particularly root growth, others are year-long bloomers and resent interference in their bloom cycle. 'Secret Garden Musk Climber' blooms twelve months out of the year in my garden; any pruning is a matter of confining it to the space allotted to it, and it certainly doesn't need rejuvenation.

Sometimes we prune our roses in a particular way in order to promote a congruence between peak bloom time and particular rose shows, like district rose shows in April, particularly if the roses are modern ones like Hybrid teas, floribundas or miniatures. Or we may prune because we have misplaced a rose when planting it and have to keep cutting it back lest it completely and fatally block a path and injure someone, or worse yet, scratch the paint job on a new car.

Sometimes we prune for aesthetic or artistic reasons; there is a rose, Santa Catalina, planted on a grey fieldstone wall at the Roseraie de l'Hay in the Val de Marne, south of Paris, that blooms in increments of about six inches—a tribute to the pruner's art, since it involves encouraging and suppressing bud eyes all along the canes in question. In another section, the rose bush is contorted into the shape of a shamrock. Since no one has yet filed a suit on behalf of the rose in any known court of law, presumably the rose does not care in either case. But we do. It is the fact of our concerns that elicits much of the drive to prune roses.

**Thirdly.** The only constant in pruning is to remove dead wood and criss-crossing branches. Once you have accomplished that task, you have completed your pruning chores for many roses. You are done. Stop. Do no more. Many chinas and polyanthas require no more. You may choose to do more for any of the reasons listed above, or for idiosyncratic reasons of your own, but the rose doesn't care.

**Fourthly.** Pruning time in mild climate Southern California is traditionally between Thanksgiving and Valentine's Day. It is the time of the year when the roses are least productive, when many of them shed their leaves, and succumb to the vicissitudes of dead and dying foliage (rust, mildew, and general miasma). But, in fact, pruning takes place all across the calendar in the fullest sense of the word, with the removal of spent blooms, blind shoots, and/or dieback of canes. As E.B. Le Grice pointed out in 'Rose Growing Complete,' in a mild climate, roses may be pruned at any time of the year. Given that it normally takes about six weeks between flushes of bloom, a second flush of blooms appropriate for a rose show requires pruning in the first month of the year here as opposed to some other choice. But if you are not going to exhibit in rose shows, you can pretty well pick a time available to you. Once again, you are free to choose—unless you have some pressing concern like a wedding that requires roses at a particular time. But if you do, be aware that your pruning concerns are driven by exogenous concerns, not those of the rose.



## Meandering in the Winter Rose Garden

By Barbara Osterberg

For the last couple of months, I have been walking through my garden, watching the roses fall slowly into slumber, one by one. I've watched the leaves turn ugly, speckled with rust, noticed where those little rose slugs have made a feast of the few luscious leaves that are left and observed the general retirement of my roses.

During this time of reduced activity, a feeling of urgency comes over me that shrieks to my inner self that I must do something to make my roses feel better!! That something is to prune! I must prune! I love to prune! I live to prune! My clippers say, prune, prune, prune! But, my mind says no, wait until the winds have come and gone. Wait for the spring sunshine. Wait for the warmth that will encourage new growth. Wait for my old body to limber up in the spring. Wait until February 14th. Don't prune yet. But, it's hard to wait.

Living near the beach, the wind, the fog and the cold makes for ugly leaves in the winter. However, I still have roses blooming. Should I prune those? Cecile Brunner is draping over a 10 foot trellis, with new roses waving their pink petals in the breeze. Mutabilis sits regally, showing off her rose and cream colored petals while all the roses around her are sleeping peacefully.

Brass Band and Strike It Rich are singing and dancing to an unknown beat; they are in full bloom. Even Princess Diana is regally springing forth with new leaf growth and new buds and will soon show her diverse shades of soft pink and white. I will have to think about these roses and keep my pruners at bay while I decide if I want to wait for their winter flush.

But it feels so good to trim the roses, shape and remove ugly leaves. It frees the spirit to see a clean bush and anticipate its first majestic bloom. My yard will feel so clean and ready for a new year and new hopes and promises. I can't wait to see the first flush of color and brag to my neighbors as they walk past my yard and enjoy the bountiful aura of spring. After all, they've been looking at this mess for 2 months. This is why I love to prune!

My husband and I prune together. Sometimes, this is a joke. We never agree just how far to prune and each of us works on our own side of the yard. Perhaps too often, I run over to remind him not to prune too much. Sometimes, I run over to remind him to prune some more and not to forget that leaf he left behind. Sometimes, I just run over to tell him what a good job he did. In the end, does it matter? All the roses come back with a flourish and we can't tell who pruned which rose anyway

After pruning, I spray with a fungicide. I rake all the dropped leaves and put them in the trash, not the compost bin. Then I add compost to the base of the rose. I double-check for small branches that may cross the bush. I check for old and diseased canes and remove them. When I'm all done, the yard looks bare with the wooden branches standing at attention like soldiers and scattered haphazardly throughout the yards. What a rush though. What I see is neatness, orderliness, and the promise of new color and fragrance. This is why I love to prune!

My pruning urge lasts for just a short while, mostly during the months of December and January. When the urge is over, the soul is peaceful and once again the weekly tasks abound. It's time to enjoy the fruits of our labors. Pruning is so satisfying, don't you think?

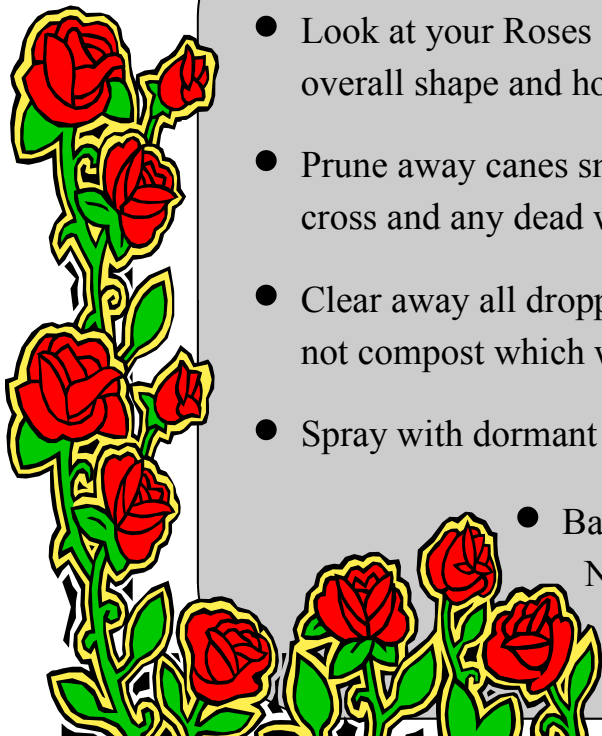
## 5 Observations cont from pg 3

**Fifthly.** Roses resemble individuals in being difficult to squeeze in a box (either those of a physical sort like some of the 'body bags' found in the supers or intellectual ones for convenience in consideration). And when you consider that a half dozen species may have contributed to the development of a particular rose, it is no wonder that individual roses have individual cachets. 'Brandy,' for example, dislikes being hard pruned and will sulk if treated that way. 'Niles Cochet,'—or whatever is the identification of a rose purchased as 'Mme Jules Graveraux'—is a climbing tea rose that negates the normal rule that tea roses pout if hard pruned. If I didn't hard prune it, it would strangle several neighborhood dogs, not to mention the postman. And it continues to pump out hundreds of bloom most every month. The person pruning a rose has an obligation to find out what particular characteristics define the individual rose in her garden.

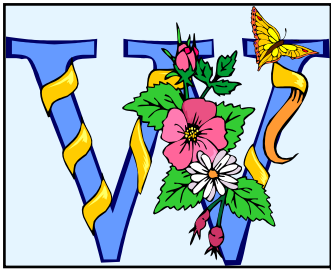
At the San Jose Heritage Rose Garden there are four different clones of the same 'Rosette Delizy.' Although each one is clearly 'Rosette Delizy,' the differences are also clear; some are more vigorous than others, while the color is more pronounced—even gaudy—in others. Finding out the personal characteristics of your roses is not a matter of consulting books, or even reading VCRS newsletters. It is a question of observation and assessment while working in the garden. It also dictates what kind of advice might be given to others.

I once waited five years for 'Dupuy Jamain' to bloom and never pruned it in that time span. For that reason I never recommend it to anyone for a home garden unless the individual someone wants a rare and unusual rose of great beauty, powerful fragrance, and relentless vigor. The rose is comfortable with itself. The trouble begins and ends with the gardener. So, take your valium or Xanax, reserve the Demerol for post operative pain, and let the pruning begin.

## *In The Garden For January*



- Look at your Roses for Pruning. Think about the overall shape and how to prune accordingly
- Prune away canes smaller than a pencil, canes that cross and any dead wood.
- Clear away all dropped foliage and toss in trash. Do not compost which will spread disease
- Spray with dormant spray &/or horticultural oil
- Bare root roses available at local Nurseries



*Is for Winter*

## The Basic

A B C

Of Rose Care

A written collaboration by Paddy Ruzella & Jane Delahanty

W is for Winter. Do you really think there is nothing to do in the garden

now that our roses are sleeping? W is also for Wrong!

If we lived in an area where there were frosts we would winterize our roses by covering their roots with mulch to keep them warm and maybe provide some sort of above ground shelter as well. But in Southern California we can get blasts of hot Santa Ana winds and lots of sunshine during the winter and some of our roses are fooled into skipping the rest period in their natural cycle. So, we “winterize” our roses by forcing them to take a brief vacation and go dormant.

What then should we “sun” people do in our gardens at this time of year? Clean-up is the operative word. First, we give our rose bushes a haircut. We shape them, cut out all the dead-wood, cut them back to encourage new growth, and denude them by taking off all the old leaves. If you are rusty on your pruning techniques or are a beginner in rose care, try one of the pruning demonstrations available this month. Our own Rose Society puts on a free demonstration at the Stagecoach Inn in Newbury Park which will be held on January 12<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 9:00 a.m. The Stagecoach garden contains mostly Old Garden Roses but there is a section of Modern Roses, so most species of roses will be covered this year. (Did you know that there is a difference in the way you tackle the pruning of the various species of roses?). Also, Otto & Sons in Fillmore will be holding four Saturday “Rose University” classes in which participants will be able to not only learn how to prune roses but also actually get to prune some of Otto’s many plants! This class runs from 10:00 a.m. to noon on the 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. There is a \$15 fee but the handouts and freebies are well worth the cost. Reservations are required.

Once the pruning is done, it is very important to get rid of all the mess you’ve created! Not only do you need to dispose of the dead wood and trimmings, you should remove and, pull any weeds around the feet of the bushes. Make your rose beds as pristine as you can because nasty things like spores, eggs and diseases lurk in the debris and can come to life and munch up your garden in the springtime! Get rid of this debris completely by letting the trash man take it away! Do not put it in your mulch or composting pile!

One final step is needed to give you the best shot at “wondrous roses” come springtime. Many of the “nasty things” are not visible to the eye so, you can further assure their demise by spraying your rose plants with a good horticultural oil. The oil will suffocate any nasties. It is important to not only spray the bush but also the ground under and around it. Since the oil will also kill off any new growth stimulated by pruning, you should spray as soon as you can after pruning.

Our pruning and preparation season runs from Thanksgiving to Valentine’s Day. In my own experience I find things work best when I take little bites over an extended period. Gone are the days when I could get it all done at once. Now I am more inclined to take one bed at a time. This year I’m going to do a couple of beds and finish them completely before moving on. I suppose it might be better to have fewer roses but that doesn’t strike me as a viable option!

Although our roses will perform their appointed tasks without our help, i.e. you don’t have to do any of the above, a little preparation will bring rewards you might otherwise miss. So, give it a try, you may find the extra effort is worth it!



# End of Season Rose Care

By Ingrid Wapelhorst

After the pruning, dormant spraying, clean up and mulching, or whatever steps you include in your annual pruning procedure, you're now ready to rest for a few months with this daunting yearly task behind you. Or are you? There's one final step that most of us don't think about or plan for until all of the other steps have been taken care of, and that's dealing with the huge pile(s) of rose canes and leaves created by the annual trimming or pruning process.

Depending on how many roses you grow, the varieties, and your pruning methods, the remaining task may be anywhere from simple to a major additional headache. Following are some different methods we've tried and some other suggestions to help deal with the final end-of-the-season clean-up process.

If you grow less than, say, 50 roses, you may find it easy to dump the pruned canes into your curbside disposal container (s)—cutting them up into small pieces allows more room for a large quantity of discards—and they can be disposed of in a few weeks of weekly garbage collection with little aggravation. If you grow 100, 200 or more roses (especially if you prune some of them fairly hard as I do most of my HT's, Austins and the like), you may find yourself facing huge piles of rose canes and leaves that accumulate faster than the weekly trash containers can accommodate. Here are some good and not-so-good disposal techniques for those faced with a large quantity of clippings:

Prune a limited number of roses each week or weekend—20-30 seems to be the maximum for each container.

**Advantages:** You'll be able to clear the yard of trimmings and debris over time, allowing your wounds to heal and your back to recover by the time you continue the process the following week.

**Disadvantages:** If you spread out the pruning over too long a period of time, the other steps in the clean-up process preceding this step need to be repeated for that section of the garden as well, which is either good or bad depending on whether you like or dislike a varied schedule. If your pruning process continues for a month or so, your spring bloom may also be staggered, changing your major spring bloom into a "wave" of color from one bed to the next and even affecting the roses available for upcoming rose shows if you are an exhibitor.

Prune everything in a few weeks and find better ways to get rid of the large heaps of canes and leaves at one time:

- a) Fill your own and your neighbors' trash bins. Don't laugh. Many people have little trash after the first of the year, with the holidays over and plants out of bloom. Asking them permission is recommended, of course, and there's little doubt they'll cooperate.
- b) Have your weekly lawn mowing person/crew make a trip to the dump for you with their truck. All you incur is the one-time disposal fee and a few extra dollars for your crew to make the trip and to do the hauling.
- c) If you have a truck, take the trip to the landfill yourself. If you don't have a truck, ask if you can borrow your neighbor's, but make sure you return it clean of residual debris and full of gas.
- d) Rent a bin from your local disposal company, fill it with your rose debris, and have it carried away in a week.
- e) When/if you have your trees pruned annually by professionals, schedule their visit for immediately after you've done your pruning and have them take care of the mulching and discarding of the rose debris as well, which they'll include in their quote to you for maybe a modest additional sum, if any. And don't forget neighbors who have their trees trimmed on off years when you don't. For a small donation, we've found they're more than willing to add a relatively quick additional hauling/chipping/mulching to their day.
- f) A Chipper/Shredder. Years ago we thought this was THE answer. For approximately \$400 we bought a super-duper chipper/shredder that ground up and threw the residuals of the rose canes into a bag for easy disposal, reducing a huge pile of canes and leaves to a small pile of pulverized pieces in no time, which were discarded within two weeks of trash pickup. The initial investment, including heavy-duty gloves and goggles, seemed well worth the time and expense for the anticipated years of use and less aggravation we expected with this machine. After two years we faced up to the downsides: the prickly rose canes stick to each other and to the operator when thrown into the mouth of the beast, many of the larger canes got jammed in the teeth and had to be pried and knocked loose with a strong wooden pole, the bag where the residual shavings accumulated filled up quickly and had to be replaced fairly often and occasionally broke loose, spilling the contents, and the noise was deafening for anyone close to the machine while it was in operation. We were fortunate to sell the machine on E-bay for about the same price we paid for it (well maintained after little use).

A final alternative: Grow many of the Old Garden Roses well suited for the Southern California climate zones or incorporate a lighter pruning technique for modern roses into your annual "pruning" routine. In this way, you won't have to worry about how to dispose of massive quantities of clippings, because you'll have far fewer canes to deal with.

# 2008 Stagecoach Garden Rose Pruning Demonstration



A Great Turnout for a  
Beautiful Day

Photo by Arden Holst



Ingrid Wapelhorst prunes  
The Baroness Prevost

Photo by Mae Chandran

The VCRS rose pruning demonstration was a grand success with a turnout of about 80 people and pruning techniques shown for China, Polyanthas, Noisette and Modern Roses

Jim Delahanty reveals the secrets of Rose Pruning



Photo by Mae Chandran

The Archduke Charles  
A 1837  
China Rose

Clay Jennings demonstrates how to sharpen garden tools

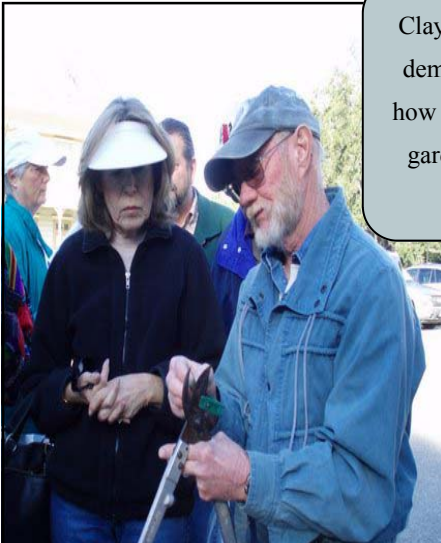


Photo by Mae Chandran

Jeri Jennings shares her vast rose knowledge with Mae Chandren



Photo by Mae Chandran

# Ventura County Rose Society

c/o Paddy Ruzella  
1405 Church Street  
Ventura, CA 93001

## Upcoming Events

VCRS February Meeting is Thursday the 28th. Dr. Thomas Cairns, former President of the ARS and the WFRS will speak on the History of the Rose

April 19 - 20

**San Fernando Valley Rose Society Rose Show**  
Descanso Gardens. La Cañada/Flintridge, CA  
For More Information Contact: Beverly Osborne  
818-341-0877

April 26

**Sacramento Rose Society 60th Annual Rose Show**  
Shepard Garden & Arts Center, Sacramento, CA  
For More Information Contact: Debbie Arrington  
916-326-5514  
One-day show, hours noon to 6 p.m.  
Shepherd Garden and Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd., Sacramento

April 26

**Sacramento Rose Society 60th Annual Rose Show**  
Shepard Garden & Arts Center, Sacramento, CA  
For More Information Contact: Debbie Arrington  
916-326-5514  
One-day show, hours noon to 6 p.m.  
Shepherd Garden and Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd., Sacramento

May 30 - June 1

**2008 ARS National All-Mini Convention and Rose Show**  
Location: Oklahoma City, OK  
For More Information Contact: Bert Wheeler, Chair  
405-282-2495