



# The Rose Window



PC: Lisa Plesko

## Flowers, Feasts & Friendships Lobsterfest Weekend

BY REGAN DUFFEE

*Yankee District, Editor  
New England Rose Society, Vice President*

This September, I finally had the opportunity to attend Lobsterfest. Back in 2023, I had signed up to attend after hearing stories from attendees, but it was cancelled due to a hurricane. In 2024, the Yankee District hosted the national convention, so I was excited for 2025 when I would finally experience it myself.

When Yankee District Director, Jacqui Nye, assembled the Lobsterfest committee, I knew I wanted to be involved. Audrey Osborn, one of the event's founding organizers, had already created a solid framework for a fun and memorable weekend, but Lauren Gisel, my sister, and I offered to step in as co-chairs for the rose show on Saturday, September 6.

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The weekend began in Harwich Port, where we boarded a private boat for a sunset cruise. A storm pushing up the coast kept us within Saquatucket Harbor, but it did not dampen spirits. We spotted a seal, watched waterfowl skim the waves, and enjoyed the glow of the setting sun while Yacht Rock floated through the speakers. The evening wrapped up with a seafood feast at Brax's Landing, where the fried scallops and strawberry cheesecake earned rave reviews.



*Watching the sun set into the sea*



*Our "Have Roses, Will Travel" packing solution*

The next morning was the rose show. Leading up to the show, quite a few people had offered to help bring the various show supplies to the Cape. This was a huge relief to us. It gave Lauren and I an opportunity to bring our roses to the show. But now the biggest challenge we faced was: how do you keep roses fresh for days without a refrigerator? So we got creative. We ordered \$20 Grubhub delivery bags, florist picks, ice packs, and notched Amazon boxes. To our surprise and delight, when we unzipped the bags Saturday morning, the roses looked perfect.

By 8am, the Chatham Community Center bustled with activity as exhibitors filed in, arms filled with roses. Lisa Plesko, though not showing, jumped into action to help with setup, rearranging tables and organizing class cards. By the end of prep time, the room was transformed: over 70 entries filled the tables.



*PC: Lisa Plesko*



From Left to Right: Jason Capote; Hybrid Tea Court; Craig Dorschel with Irwin & Cindy Ehrenreich; Craig Dorschel with Audrey Osborn  
PC: Lisa Plesko

The judging ran smoothly under the steady guidance of Chair of Judges, Mike Fuss, who divided the panel into three teams. Clerks Toni Simonetti, Jeannette Danehy, and Lisa kept the process efficient and organized. Soon, it was time for the awards ceremony. The room erupted with cheers as winners were announced and cash prizes awarded. A big congratulations goes to Jason Capote who was the big winner in the exhibition hybrid tea class. He won Queen of the Show with his entry of The Philosopher's Rose, as well as Princess of the Show with Touch of Class. Audrey Osborn made an incredible return to rose showing, winning the Yankee Rosarian Trophy, and the Sweepstakes Award. I know her late husband, Oz, who has always been by her side, was with us that day. As American Rose Society President, Craig Dorschel, announced every award, I could feel the energy in the room. It did not feel competitive, but communal. Every ribbon was cheered, every exhibitor celebrated. It was, quite simply, a joy to be part of. In fact, I would say it was one of the most enjoyable shows I have ever exhibited in, second only to nationals.



PC: Diane Brailsford

The afternoon gave way to leisure. Some members went shopping or walked the beach, while others enjoyed time by the pool. Those of us staying in Chatham ended up at the Red Nun, sipping cocktails on the patio and enjoying the chance to deepen friendships outside the show room. Dinner at Swan River was a quintessential Lobsterfest tradition: lobster bibs, buttery shells, and a feast from the sea.

On Sunday morning, we traveled to Barnstable, where Irwin and Cindy Ehrenreich graciously opened their home and garden. The day began with the Yankee District meeting, led by Regional Director Toni Simonetti, who kept discussions moving.

Then came a highlight of the weekend: a propagation event in the Ehrenreichs' garden. Despite the rain, Irwin and Cindy led us through their remarkable collection of 500 roses. With their generosity, attendees were able to take cuttings, and potted them up with soil provided.

Adding to the excitement, another package of cuttings arrived from Teddie Mower, collected from the late Anne Belovich's garden. Dave Cannistraro and I potted up 93 cuttings of these endangered roses, with the hope they will take root, and can be distributed to New England gardens next spring. Outside in the rain, Christine Fort and Maria Connell dug up roses to be replanted in Lynn Woods, a New England Rose Society's display garden. I am sure the Ehrenreichs are happy to know their roses will be enjoyed by the Friends of Lynn Woods for years to come. With cuttings and freshly dug up rose bushes packed up in the car, Lobsterfest weekend came to a close.

A few days later, Lisa sent me a link to all the pictures she took from the weekend. As I scrolled through the photos, I got emotional. As I looked through the photos I saw captured: new friends becoming old friends, novices becoming rosarians, gardens being downsized, gardens being revived, and preservation of old roses for new generations. And it reminded why I love being part of this community.

Lobsterfest is more than a weekend of roses and lobster feasts. It is a reminder of why we gather, why we preserve, and why we celebrate together. I came away not only with memories but with hope for what next spring will bring.



*Top: Jeannette Danehy carries freshly potted up cuttings back to her car.*

*Above: Christine Fort and Maria Connell dig out roses from the Ehrenreich's garden to be replanted in the Lynn Woods garden.*

*Far Left: Dave Cannistraro shows attendees how to propagate roses.*

*Left: Regan Duffee, Lauren Gisel and Valentina Nardini pot up and record the cuttings sent from Teddie Mower.*

*PC: Lisa Plesko*



# From the Editor



WINTER HAS A WAY OF SLOWING THINGS DOWN IN THE GARDEN WHILE GIVING US SPACE TO REFLECT & PLAN, AND THIS ISSUE OF THE ROSE WINDOW FEELS LIKE THE PERFECT COMPANION FOR THE SEASON.

INSIDE, YOU'LL FIND A RECAP OF THE YANKEE DISTRICT FALL CONVENTION ON CAPE COD, THE GRAND FINALE OF THE GROWING SEASON. THERE'S ALSO A HOLIDAY-READY RECIPE FROM CONNECTICUT ROSE SOCIETY PRESIDENT, BECKY MARTORELLI, THAT IS AS COMFORTING AS IT IS DELICIOUS, ALONG WITH PATSY CUNNINGHAM'S THOUGHTFUL EXPLORATION OF FLOWER ARRANGING IN THE IKEBANA STYLE, OFFERING A FRESH PERSPECTIVE FOR HOLIDAY DÉCOR. NEW ENGLAND ROSE SOCIETY PRESIDENT LAUREN GISEL CANDIDLY SHARES HER ONGOING BATTLE WITH VOLES, A RELATABLE REMINDER THAT EVERY ROSARIAN FACES CHALLENGES, AND WE ROUND OUT THE ISSUE WITH SPOTLIGHTS ON OUR LOCAL SOCIETIES, WHOSE DEDICATION CONTINUES TO KEEP THE YANKEE DISTRICT VIBRANT AND GROWING.

AS WE LOOK AHEAD, THE EVENT I AM MOST EXCITED ABOUT IS OUR UPCOMING SPRING CONVENTION. IT WAS THE YANKEE DISTRICT SPRING CONVENTION THAT FIRST SPARKED MY OWN INVOLVEMENT IN ROSE SOCIETIES THREE YEARS AGO, AND RETURNING TO STURBRIDGE FEELS ESPECIALLY MEANINGFUL. THIS MARCH, WE'LL GATHER ONCE AGAIN AT THE PUBLIC HOUSE FOR A THREE-DAY CONVENTION THEMED "ROSES IN THE TIME OF FROST AND FIRE." IT PROMISES TO BE A WEEKEND OF LEARNING, CAMARADERIE, AND THE KIND OF SHARED ENTHUSIASM THAT CARRIES US THROUGH WINTER AND STRAIGHT INTO SPRING.

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR CONTRIBUTORS, AND LOCAL SOCIETIES WHO MAKE THIS PUBLICATION POSSIBLE. I HOPE THIS ISSUE BRINGS YOU INSPIRATION, A FEW NEW IDEAS, AND PLENTY TO LOOK FORWARD TO AS WE COUNT DOWN TO THE FIRST BLOOMS OF 2026.

REGAN DUFFEE



# *A Recipe for the Holidays (or any day!)*

## Crepes with a Creamy Rose Filling

From Becky Martorelli  
Connecticut Rose Society, President

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Many good things come from growing roses without pesticides: fragrant petals you can turn into syrup or jelly, and—my personal favorite—rosewater, which lends its charm to everything from pastries to home remedies. I have been tinkering with “rose” recipes for more than a decade, testing each creation on family members. If they respond with a thumbs-up rather than a raised eyebrow, the recipe earns a spot in my “make-again” file for potlucks and special occasions. Yes, it is undeniably easier to open a boxed mix, but if you want a flavor that stands out from the everyday American dessert rotation, a rose-infused dish is the way to go.

As the holidays race toward us (as they always seem to do), I start plotting menus for family gatherings. Will we be convening for brunch or dinner? If dinner is on the agenda, I’ll add a rosy dessert. If brunch is the plan, the options multiply—but rest assured, I will find a way to sneak in at least one “rose” recipe.

Years ago, when my son was in college, he came home raving about a restaurant that served crepes—ALL kinds of crepes. Sweet, savory, you name it. He was so inspired he briefly considered opening his own crepe shop... until he realized that running a restaurant requires significantly more than enthusiasm and a solid appetite. But his crepe obsession planted a seed. I set out to create a filling that was gently sweet, lightly perfumed with rose, and had enough protein to feel somewhat responsible.

Most of the ingredients are easy to find. However, rose hip jam or jelly, rose petal syrup, and rose water may require a trip to a Mediterranean or European specialty store—or a quick online search. I make my own rose hip jam, but I leave rose water to the professionals and order mine from Alteya Organics online.





# *Crepes with a Creamy Rose Filling*

Yield: 6 crepes



## Ingredients for crepe shells:

- 1 cup cold milk
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- pinch of salt
- 2 tablespoons sugar



Pre-grease a griddle or non-stick frying pan before cooking the shells. I prefer to use avocado oil.

## Filling:

- 8 oz. Whole milk ricotta cheese
- 1/4 cup rose hip jam or jelly
- 1 teaspoon rose water
- 1 tablespoon milk

Optional toppings: Powdered sugar; Rose syrup; fresh raspberries

## Directions:

1. Place crepe ingredients into a blender in the order listed. Blend until smooth, scraping sides as you go.
2. Heat the griddle or skillet over medium high heat. Pour a small ladle of batter onto the hot surface. If you are using a griddle, use the bottom of the ladle to swirl the batter around until the size of a small pancake. You want the batter to be thin. If using a pan, rotate the pan until the batter evenly coats the bottom. Fry until golden brown spots form on the bottom {about 20 seconds}. Flip and cook the other side another 15 seconds and remove to a plate. Add in a few dribbles of oil as needed, usually after every 3 or 4 crepes. Cover cooked crepes with foil to keep them warm.
3. For the Rose Ricotta filling, stir all listed ingredients together in a deep bowl until nearly smooth. The jam will leave small chunks behind, but the overall texture will be creamy.
4. To serve, spread the filling on warm crepes and wrap or fold the sides together.

Optional: Top with powdered sugar, rose syrup, or fresh berries if desired.

THE YANKEE DISTRICT of THE AMERICAN ROSE SOCIETY  
PRESENTS

# ROSES

IN THE TIME OF  
FROST AND FIRE



MARCH 6-8, 2026  
STURBRIDGE, MA





# YANKEE DISTRICT'S SPRING CONVENTION

The Yankee District Spring Convention will take place March 6–8, 2026, at the Publick House in Sturbridge, Massachusetts. This year's theme, *Roses in the Time of Frost & Fire*, reflects that familiar late-winter moment when gardeners gather indoors, share ideas, learn from one another, and reignite their enthusiasm for roses, even before the snow and frost has had a chance to melt into spring.

A special room rate of \$149 per night is available using code 0326RO, guaranteed through February 6, 2026. Attendees are encouraged to book early to take advantage of this rate. The Publick House's website is [www.publickhouse.com](http://www.publickhouse.com). Please be cautious of third-party websites.



The weekend will start on Friday with a Judge's School. The district is currently experiencing a shortage of judges, so this is a great opportunity to become a judge, or renew your judging license. Anyone interested in participating should contact Jason Capote.

For those not attending the Judge's School, the convention begins Friday evening with a welcome dinner, followed by time in the hospitality room. Once the hospitality room opens, everyone comes together. Attendees are invited to bring snacks and drinks to share, and their favorite game. Card games, Mah Jongg, Scrabble, and casual hangouts make it easy to meet new people and catch up with familiar faces.



Education is at the core of the Spring Convention, with programming designed to support both experienced rosarians and those still building their skills. Our keynote speaker will be Ping Lim, a renowned rose breeder best known for creating the True Bloom series. These roses are recognized for combining the classic form and beauty of hybrid tea roses with the disease resistance and easy-care habits of modern shrub roses. His presentation will offer insight into modern rose breeding and what growers can expect from newer introductions, particularly in challenging climates like New England.

Additional educational sessions include Leon Ginenthal, who will present on Landscaping with Old Garden Roses, focusing on how to incorporate these roses into practical and attractive garden designs. The weekend will also feature a rosarian panel discussion on growing Hybrid Teas successfully in New England, sharing real-world experience, tips, and problem-solving strategies.

We could not have such an incredible event without the help of many nurseries. J.C. Bakker Nurseries has committed to a generous sponsorship, while other nurseries have donated roses and gift cards that will be offered at the auction during the convention. These include longtime favorites as well as new-to-market varieties.

The district is also accepting raffle items, and donations are welcome.

Registration will be available through the Yankee District website. Details will be announced soon, so keep an eye on social media for updates and registration information.



# WINTER HOLIDAYS & IKEBANA



**BY PATSY CUNNINGHAM**

*Yankee District Arrangement Chair & Yankee District Webmaster*

At the time of this November newsletter, we are approaching the winter holiday season. The major holidays at this time are all related to the spirituality of the people celebrating an important moment in their people's history. The three that I am aware of are Hannukah, Christmas and Bodhi Day. Jewish Hanukkah commemorates a miraculous event in 164 BCE during the rededication of the temple after the Maccabean revolt where a small amount of oil, meant to burn for just one day, instead burned for eight. Christian Christmas on December 25 celebrates the birth of Jesus, along with the happenings surrounding this event. In Buddhism, Bodhi Day on December 8 commemorates the day that the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree.

As with all special holidays, there are traditions attached to each such as the nightly menorah lighting for Hannukah, evergreen trees with lights and presents for Christmas and some Buddhist homes will have a ficus tree that they decorate with beads and multi-colored lights. They will also put on reflective ornaments that represent the Three Jewels: Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Prayer and scripture reading are common to all three.

This is a good time to brighten your house with flowers for celebration. Holidays also involve family, friends and guests; and flower arrangements are a way of welcoming people into your home. In Japan, the development of some styles of ikebana was specifically directed towards honoring guests. They went to great lengths to make sure the guest sat in the place in the tokonoma alcove, where the best view of the arrangement was near them.

Ikebana itself is not just beautifully arranged flowers. It was strongly influenced by Shinto and Buddhism, and reflects our connection to nature. Well known ikebana practitioner Ilsa Beunen says. "Each arrangement is a mindful journey, expressing gratitude, harmony, and renewal—values that resonate deeply with the holiday season...you're not just decorating; you're honoring a tradition that celebrates beauty, mindfulness, and the story behind every branch and flower."

At this time of year most of us just grab a bag of flowers at the market, shove them in a vase of water and call it done. Its still nice to have but you can try for more. There are a couple of ways of approaching ikebana that are simple, don't require years of lessons, but will still yield a more elegant and striking arrangement. One of these is the ancient Moribana, or "piled flowers", and the other is Freestyle, a modern interpretation of ikebana. The moribana has some guidelines which gives beginners a more secure way to start, so that is what the December demonstration will focus on.

For the RIRS December Holiday meeting, I will be giving a brief demonstration of a simple Moribana design using a kenzan with evergreens and roses. The evergreens will last through the holidays. The roses can be easily replaced with flowers of your choice on the kenzan whenever they have lost their beauty.

Those who came to the Yankee District Doldrums in March saw Craig Dorschel give a demonstration of a type of moribana. This will be similar, but simpler, as we have a number of craftspeople who will be demonstrating and showing their wares.

Start with a low round or oval bowl with a flat bottom inside so that the kenzan (pin frog) will be stable. Choose a color for your container suitable to the holiday. For Hannukah, blue and white are traditional, with blue being a reminder of the heavens and God's commandments. Some commonly used flowers are white alstroemeria, white and blue hydrangeas, lilies and roses. For Christmas, green represents renewal and everlasting life while red can represent the blood of Christ. Bodhi Day traditionally has blue for the spirit of universal compassion, yellow for The Middle Way and red for the blessings of practice, achievement, wisdom, and fortune.

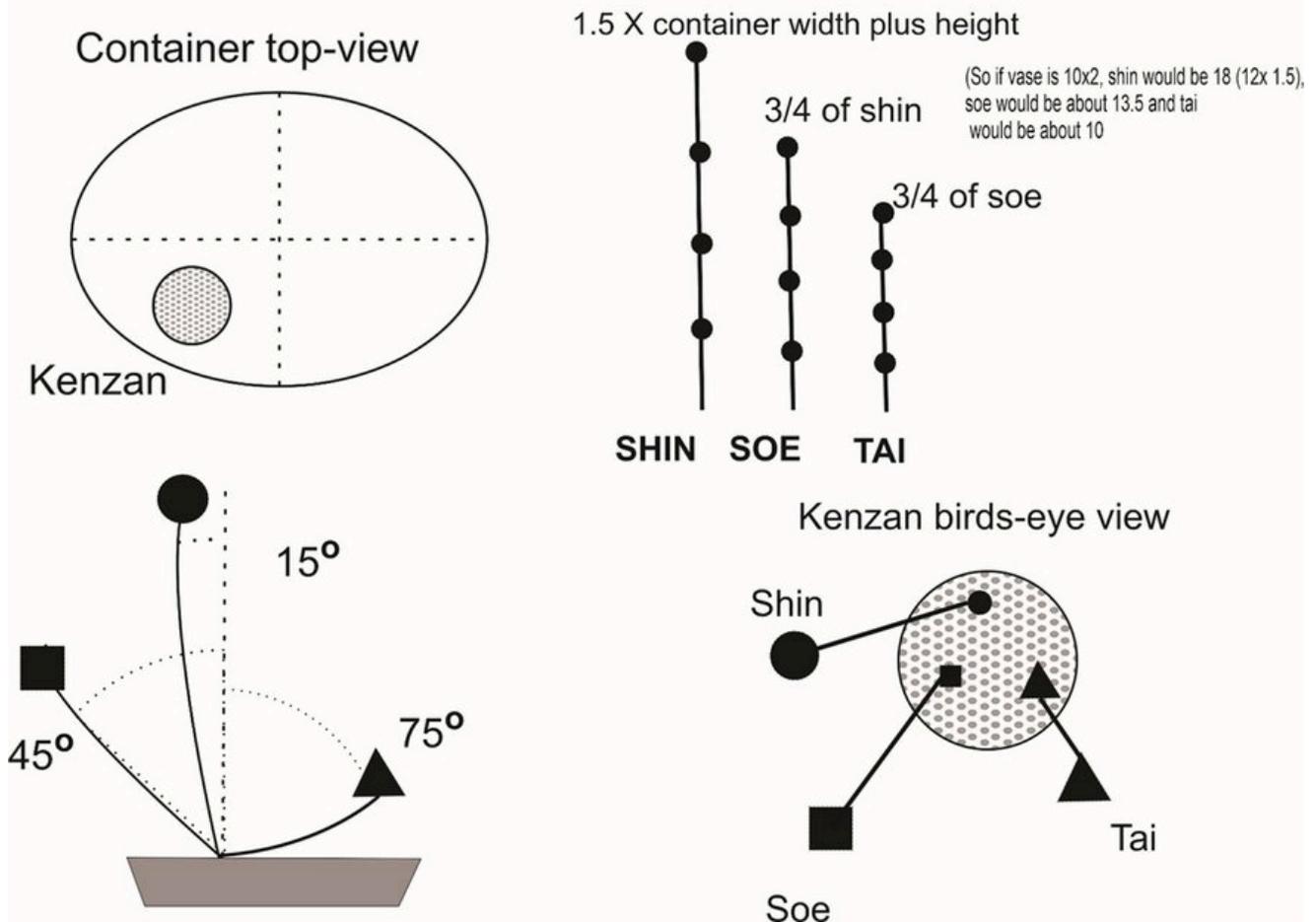
A simple holiday Ikebana using easily obtained materials involves selecting a few seasonal items and arranging them in a shallow vase with a kenzan (pin holder) to create an asymmetrical, triangular shape. Besides greens like pine, holly and cedar, try adding interesting bare branches. Since we are a rose society, get a few roses from the market, though carnations can be effective too. Below are examples of a basic upright moribana, which are achievable and fun for any beginner.



Moribana Ikebana arrangements are often based on a triangular form with three main stems, known as Shin, Soe, and Hikae or Tai. These have different meanings depending on the school of Ikebana which include heaven, man, and earth or father, mother, child. The shin and soe are often branches, with or without leaves, while the tai (also known as hikae) is usually a stem of flowers. Start by placing your kenzan on the left side of the shallow vase and adding water. Then measure the width plus the height of your low bowl and multiply by 1 and a half or two. That is the length of your shin. Place the shin almost upright in the kenzan, at about 15 degrees, pointing slightly forward toward the left. The soe is about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the length of the shin and should slant 45 degrees toward the left front. The tai is  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the length of the soe, and is pointing forward and to the right. The tai is where you will be placing your replaceable holiday blooms, while the evergreen shin and soe will stay in place for the season. Use a smaller piece of your shin material behind your shin and soe if it looks too sparse. These are called ashirai or jushi, they are the "helpers". The flower used in the tai is usually in a group so add in a couple of more roses with shorter stems to make an uneven (scalene) triangle shape.

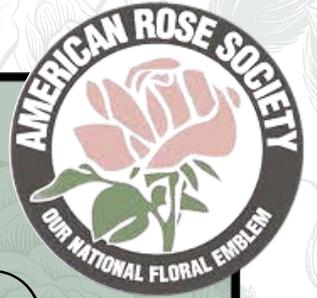
This is for your holiday display so feel free to add some small shiny ornaments or other items that speak to you. You can spray paint bare branches silver or gold to be more festive. Use small seasonal flowers as accents. The most important warning is not to overcrowd your arrangement. Let each element have its own space. Keep it simple and keep it asymmetrical, key features of most ikebana.

## UPRIGHT MORIBANA



Above is the basic illustration for the angles, lengths and placements for an upright moribana. An easily printable full size illustration can be found under Resources on the websites [rirs.org](http://rirs.org) and [arsyankee.org](http://arsyankee.org).

This demonstration for the RIRS December meeting will be short. If time allows, I will have an extra container, kenzan and flowers for one or two people to try after the other crafters have presented. However, the Yankee District is hoping to have a hands-on rose arranging workshop this year either in conjunction with the Lobsterfest or during the winter months, so keep in touch through the Google group and the website [arsyankee.org](http://arsyankee.org) so that you don't miss out.



AMERICAN ROSE SOCIETY'S

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# Garden Under Siege:

## A Rose Grower's Battle with Voles



**BY LAUREN GISEL**

*Yankee District, Membership Chair  
New England Rose Society, President*

It started with two roses. On a Friday afternoon, I noticed both looked oddly wilted, leaves dry and crinkled, as if they'd been flash-dried in place. Two days later, three more had followed suit. By the end of the next week, several others showed the same sudden collapse. Within three weeks, I had lost fourteen plants that had seemed perfectly healthy just days before.

October had been mild, and drought wasn't to blame, but something felt off. When I tugged gently at one of the wilted shrubs, the plant lifted free with hardly any resistance. What should have been a dense, fibrous root ball was gone, completely severed. All that remained below the surface was two to four inches of cane sitting loosely in the soil, no crown, no rootstock, nothing anchoring it to the earth.

Accepting that my garden was under attack, I began lifting roses preemptively, twenty-three in all, many of them the most valuable plants in the collection. Most had already suffered severe root damage, their systems chewed down to short, ragged stubs. I potted each one, hoping to overwinter them safely above ground and salvage what I could from the invasion. My seven-foot-tall Wollerton Old Hall climber had a root ball that would have comfortably fit in a two-gallon pot, though I gave it three gallons out of optimism for winter growth.



*The culprit was clear: voles.*

And not just one or two. Judging by the tunnels, I had a whole cast of them, an underground ensemble staging a Caddyshack remake in my rose garden, minus the golf balls and explosions (so far).

### **Know Your Enemy**

Two species of voles are most relevant to New England gardeners, the prairie vole (*Microtus ochrogaster*) and the woodland or pine vole (*Microtus pinetorum*). Both are small, chestnut-brown rodents that resemble plump field mice, but their habits differ in ways that matter deeply to gardeners.

The prairie vole is the more visible menace. It creates surface runways, feeding on grasses and sometimes girdling shrubs or young trees by chewing the bark in neat rings around the base.

The woodland vole, on the other hand, is the stealth operator. It lives almost entirely underground, feeding on roots and rootstocks. Roses, fruit trees, and ornamentals are common casualties. The damage usually isn't apparent until the plant suddenly collapses, by then, the vole has long since moved on to the next meal.

And crucially, voles do not hibernate. They remain active throughout winter, tunneling beneath snow and mulch while continuing to feed on roots, bark, and stored plant material. When food is scarce outdoors, they'll take advantage of any opportunity, including, as my trail camera revealed last winter, breaking into a garden shed to feast on eighty dormant rose bushes in storage.

Population peaks occur every few years and can reach staggering levels, particularly when dense vegetation, mulch, or snow cover provides protection from predators.

### **Detecting the Damage**



Woodland voles don't make the visible runways characteristic of prairie voles, so early detection is difficult. Their work happens entirely below ground, and the first sign is often a plant that suddenly wilts or can be lifted out of the soil with minimal effort.

Look for small, round openings about an inch in diameter near the crown of shrubs or in mulched beds. Gently probing the soil with your fingers can sometimes reveal hollow runs just beneath the surface. Fresh, crumbly soil or small, collapsing pockets beneath mulch are also clues that a colony is active.

### **Managing the Problem**

Once voles have found your garden, eradication is wishful thinking. The goal is to make your beds less appealing and your plants less vulnerable.



*Woodland*



*Prairie*

PC: Fixr

## *Habitat and Cultural Control*

Pull back mulch from the base of shrubs to reduce cover, avoid dense groundcovers that conceal burrow entrances, and clear away piles of leaves or debris. A 4-foot vegetation-free zone around the base of young shrubs or trees helps make the area less hospitable.

## *Root Barrier*

For new plantings, root baskets, such as Root Guard Speed Baskets or Vole King Root Baskets, provide physical protection. These are made of stainless or galvanized mesh with openings smaller than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch, small enough to exclude voles while allowing root growth. They come in sizes from one gallon up to five, though larger ones can be harder to find.



For established roses, retrofitting protection is difficult. Installing baskets requires digging and replanting, practical only for smaller or already compromised plants. In larger beds, you can create a perimeter barrier by burying hardware cloth vertically at least a foot deep and six to ten inches above ground.

## *Repellents*

Vole repellents fall into two main categories:

1. Taste deterrents, such as thiram or capsaicin, which make plant material unpalatable.
2. Scent-based deterrents, such as fox or coyote urine, which signal predator presence and can suppress vole activity.

Many gardeners, myself included, have tried products like MoleMax, Vole Scram, and Mole & Vole Stopper, most of which rely on castor oil. When watered into the soil, castor oil gives it an unpleasant taste and smell, encouraging voles to move elsewhere.

The usual strategy involves applying the product in stages every 24 to 48 hours, starting at the center (or one end) of the garden and gradually extending outward, effectively pushing voles section by section out of the area. During this process, it's common to see a temporary spike in activity as the animals move away from the treated zones.

While these repellents can help in small gardens or sandy soils, they're weather-sensitive and labor-intensive. Rain quickly reduces their effect, and results are often short-lived. Persistence helps, but expectations should stay modest.

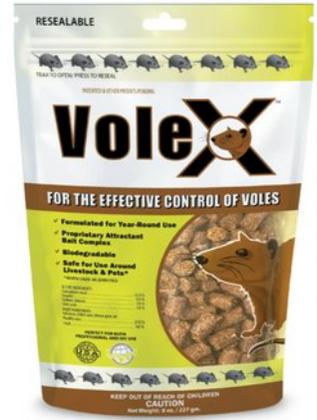
## Trapping

Trapping can help confirm vole activity or reduce very small populations but is impractical on a large scale. Colonies may number in the hundreds within a limited area, and trapping alone rarely changes the outcome.

## Baiting

Baiting should be considered a last resort, and if the problem persists despite habitat modification, repellents, and barriers, it may be best to contact a licensed pest management professional.

A newer, low-risk product, Vole-X, uses a non-toxic mode of action that poses no secondary danger to pets or wildlife. However, most other rodenticides, particularly anticoagulants and zinc phosphide, carry significant risks to non-target animals.



If rodenticides are used, they must always be placed in tamper-resistant bait stations, never broadcast or left uncovered. Open baiting is unsafe, illegal in many settings, and often less effective than professional intervention. All rodenticides pose risks to pets, people, and wildlife through either direct consumption or secondary poisoning. Second-generation anticoagulants in particular can be deadly to raptors and scavengers, and even small amounts can cause fatal bleeding. Always read and follow the product label carefully, and when in doubt, leave application to a licensed professional.

Fumigants are not recommended for vole control in home landscapes; their shallow, porous tunnels allow gases to escape before reaching lethal concentrations.



## ***Lessons from the Underground***

The roses now overwintering in my basement are survivors, temporary refugees from a hidden war beneath the soil. There, they will be coddled and loved all season long, safe from the tiny saboteurs outside. Come spring, I'll replant them in fortified ground, a little wiser and perhaps a little more suspicious of every patch of soft earth.

These days, I make a habit of gently testing the roses that remain in the beds, rocking each one slightly to feel how firmly it's anchored, and probing the soil with a bamboo garden stake to check for loose, hollow patches that might signal fresh tunneling below. It's not paranoia, just vigilance born from experience.

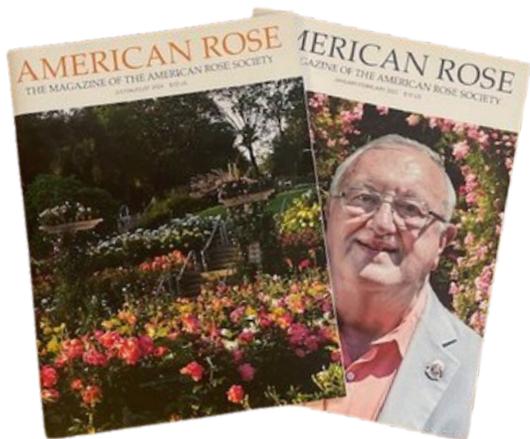
I may never achieve total victory, but as with so much in gardening, persistence and humor go a long way.



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# Connecticut Rose Society Happenings

Greetings, fellow Connecticut Rosarians.

This has been a year of change and renewed momentum for the Connecticut Rose Society. To improve accessibility for members across the state, we have relocated our monthly meetings to a more centralized venue. Beginning in February 2026, CRS will meet on the first Saturday of each month (unless it falls on a holiday weekend or a district event is taking place). Doors will open at 10:00 a.m. at our new location: Lutheran Church of St. Mark, 75 Griswold Street, Glastonbury, CT.

We launched the 2025–2026 season with a wonderful Wine & Roses gathering in September at the home of Marci and Bob Martin. Marci's gardens never fail to inspire, and the September timing gives members a rare opportunity to appreciate the beauty and character of roses as they transition toward the end of the growing season. As always, Marci's roses were exceptional.

Our October meeting featured Dr. Jatinder Aulakh of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, who provided an informative review of the most common weeds that challenge our rose beds. Members learned about weed life cycles, up-to-date management strategies, and the newest additions to the state's Invasive Species List.

In November, we shifted to a timely and highly relevant topic for gardeners: ticks. Megan Linske, research scientist at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, delivered an excellent presentation on the five tick species currently found in Connecticut, the pathogens they may carry, and their preferred habitats. She also discussed life cycles, peak activity periods, and the most effective windows for management.

## Dates to Look Forward to in 2026

- January 2 – Annual Holiday Luncheon and festivities
- February 7 – Roses and Romance: The Language of Love
- A special presentation by Marci Martin on the Victorian "language of flowers," exploring the symbolism behind rose colors and varieties, and how these meanings have been used to express love and emotion.
- March 14 – Topic to be announced
- April 11 – Topic to be announced
- May 2 – Topic to be announced





# Connecticut Rose Society Happenings

continued...

CRS is also pleased to offer its annual members-only rose sale. This year's selection includes ten carefully chosen varieties from Star Roses, including two new introductions, all available in limited quantities. These high-quality bare-root roses will be ready for pick-up at our April meeting.

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*Dr. Jatinder Aulakh*  
*PC: CT Agriculture Experiment Station website*

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# Roses in Focus: THE RIRS'S ANNUAL CALENDAR



The Rhode Island Rose Society is delighted to announce the winners of our 2026 Calendar Photo Contest, a long-standing tradition that highlights the beauty of their members' gardens and the artistry behind every bloom.

Organized once again by Patsy Cunningham, this year's contest drew over 80 photo submissions. The results were nothing short of spectacular. Clive Nickerson's striking image of "Double Delight" earned the top honor of the cover photo, a beautiful welcome to the 2026 edition. Baldo Villegas's photograph of "Louisville Lady" was named Best Photo of the Year and will appear as the feature for June, while his portraits of The Charlatan and Maroon Eight claimed second and third place, respectively.

For nearly two decades, the RIRS calendar has been a beloved fundraiser supporting the Society's educational programs, meetings, and outreach. Calendars can be purchased for \$10, and make great gifts as we head into the holiday season. Each purchase directly supports the mission of the Rhode Island Rose Society. Please reach out to Patsy to place your order, and plan to pick them up at RIRSs December meeting.

Congratulations to Clive, Baldo, and all the talented photographers! Your creativity and passion make this annual project such a success. The 2026 Rhode Island Rose Society Calendar is available now. Be sure to purchase one (or two!) to support RIRS and enjoy a year of the most photogenic roses.





## New England Rose Society Marks 85 Years of Growth and Gratitude

It was a perfect autumn day for the New England Rose Society's 85th Founders Day celebration, held at the historic Wamsutta Club in New Bedford. The day began at 10 a.m. with a private tour of the Glass Museum, located in the club's lower level, which was originally the building's bowling alley. The 90-minute tour, led by Kirk, offered a fascinating look at the artistry and history behind the collection.



After the tour, members gathered in the upstairs salon, where they enjoyed time to mingle and reconnect before lunch. At noon, attendees moved into the main dining room for a luncheon program filled with reflection, recognition, and inspiration.

NERS President Lauren Gisel opened the ceremony with a heartfelt Year in Review, highlighting the many accomplishments of the past year. She emphasized that NERS thrives because of the efforts of its volunteers and recognized Valentina Nardini for her exceptional work in creating the new website, which launched in April 2025. The site has streamlined many of the society's activities, including membership renewals, event registration, consulting rosarian connections, and the annual rose sale fundraiser.



American Rose Society President Craig Dorschel then took the podium and shared exciting news about the future of the ARS. He announced that the organization is beginning a period of change, transitioning away from the Shreveport, Louisiana headquarters and garden to focus more on serving and growing memberships throughout the country. He noted that this shift will bring the ARS closer to its members and help ensure a more connected, modern organization. Many members expressed optimism and support for this positive and necessary step forward.



Craig then introduced keynote speaker Teddie Mower, who traveled from Indiana to give a moving presentation on Anne Belovich and her extraordinary garden. Teddie's talk shared the story of Anne's lifelong dedication to preserving heritage and climbing roses, as well as her belief that these old varieties should remain accessible to the public. Through her work, Anne saved hundreds of rare roses from extinction, planting them across her gardens overlooking Puget Sound. She also worked with rosarians across the country to ensure her collection would continue to live on through projects such as the Save the Rambler initiative. Teddie emphasized how Anne's garden became a living archive of rose history, and how collaboration between societies like NERS and ARS is vital to continuing her mission.

Following Teddie's presentation, NERS Vice President Regan Duffee spoke about the society's direct involvement in the initiative to save Anne's roses, not just the ramblers, but all varieties at risk of being lost. She explained how certain roses were selected to be trialed in New England and how this work has strengthened connections among gardeners, educators, and volunteers throughout the region. The presentation reflected both the scientific and emotional commitment behind preserving these living pieces of horticultural history.

To close the program, Craig Dorschel presented several American Rose Society Presidential Citations. One was awarded to the New England Rose Society for its preservation efforts. Individual citations were presented to both Lauren Gisel and Regan Duffee for their contributions to the ARS NextGen Committee, which is helping to modernize the organization and engage the next generation of rosarians. A citation was also presented to Teddie Mower in recognition of her leadership and dedication to the Save the Rambler Project.



The day ended with warm applause and gratitude for everyone who made the event possible, especially Teddie, whose participation marked the culmination of a year-long collaboration. As members departed, there was a strong sense of pride, optimism, and community spirit, a reminder that the love of roses continues to bring people together and inspire action for generations to come.

*Previous Page: Top Photo - Attendees tour the glass museum. Bottom photo - Craig Dorschel provides ARS updates.*

*Current Page: Top Photo - Teddie Mower gives a presentation on Anne Belovich & her preservation efforts. Bottom photo - Group photo.*

*Unfortunately, we weren't able to capture all the attendees.*

*PC: Chu Jung*



# NERS 2025 Year in Review

**BY LAUREN GISEL**

*Yankee District, Membership Chair  
New England Rose Society, President*

This year has been full of learning, laughter, and connection. We've grown as gardeners and as friends, and I'm so proud of what we've built together.



*Above: Melissa Arsenie stands amongst the donated roses from Roseland Nursery, Wolf Hill & Mahoney's Garden Center*

*(PC: Regan Duffee)*

*Below: NERS Executive Board - Jeannette Danehy, Lauren Gisel, Maria Connell, Regan Duffee & Valentina Nardini*

*(PC: Chu Jung)*



Before getting into the events of the year, I want to highlight one of our winter successes, a fundraising effort made possible by the generosity of three local garden centers: Roseland, Mahoney's, and Wolf Hill. The first pickup day at Mahoney's set the tone; we packed our cars to the gills, barely able to squeeze into the driver's seat without being poked by thorns. Later, during our visit to Roseland, the girls all piled into Dave's truck as we browsed the selection, taking at least thirty David Austins in our haul, and then stopped for lunch nearby. It was one of those simple, memorable days that felt like peak NERS camaraderie. Each of us kept count; Maria managed to fit about 45 roses, while I somehow crammed in 52. We built a massive online spreadsheet for ordering and spent three to four weeks coordinating the pickup of more than 250 roses. It was a huge effort but a rewarding one that brought in about \$2,400 for the society, funds that supported our programs, events, and rose show extras throughout the year.

This year also brought a full branding refresh for NERS. We designed new jackets, hats, shirts, including some featuring the Rose Show program cover design, as well as new pamphlets and brochures. The result was a cohesive, polished look that truly reflects the vibrant spirit of our society.

And on a personal note, this was Regan's and my second year leading NERS alongside Maria and Valentina, and I've loved every bit of it. What started as a leadership team has really become a close circle of friends. Spending time together, whether planning events or just chatting about roses, has been one of the most rewarding parts of the year for me.

**January** started us off strong with our Propagation Panel, where members, Christine Fort, Ronnie Wei, Dave Cannistraro, & Hathaway Norman, shared their personal techniques for rooting cuttings. It was a lively and generous exchange; people compared successes, failures, and clever workarounds. We heard so many creative approaches and welcomed several new voices into the mix. It set a collaborative tone for the year and reminded us that there's always more than one way to grow a rose. I sadly missed that meeting, but I appreciated being able to catch up afterward through everyone's PowerPoints and handouts. It was wonderful to see the creativity and ideas shared.

**February** brought us Dave's presentation, a virtual tour through his gardens and a masterclass in practical rose growing. The session drew a large crowd of guests and non-members, more than we typically see. Dave's talk was perfectly tailored for those just beginning to explore rose culture. His humor, clear explanations, and approachable style made the subject feel accessible without losing depth, and it was easy to see why so many left feeling inspired.

In **March**, I gave a talk on drip irrigation, a practical overview of how to set up and manage systems for home gardens. We covered layout design, key components, and how to make irrigation both efficient and low-maintenance. The discussion afterward turned into a great exchange of ideas about water use, soil moisture management, and ways to adapt irrigation for different garden sizes.

By **April**, we were ready to get outside again. A group of us met at Rest Stop Ranch for spring pruning and garden cleanup. Chu and Maria joined as consulting rosarians, and it was such a joy to work side by side with friends after a long winter. We also learned about RSR's mission and monthly programs and got to see their breathtaking daffodil collection, truly unlike anything I'd ever seen, with varieties I didn't even know existed.

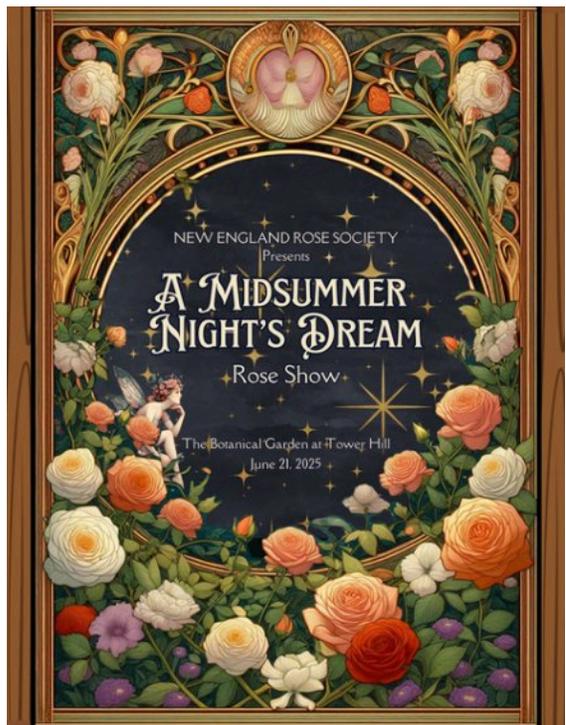
**May** took us to Jacqui's garden in Rhode Island for our friendly competition, where Irwin & Cindy Ehrenreich and Baldo Villegas each led a team as master exhibitors and judges. They demonstrated how to identify the ideal bloom, then showed attendees how to take that rose from the garden to the show table, grooming it to perfection and explaining each step along the way. It was hands-on, engaging, and incredibly educational, a completely new take on rose show prep that left everyone inspired. We also joined Garden Center Days at Roseland and at Wentworth Greenhouses in Rollinsford, New Hampshire, where we spent the day chatting with gardeners, answering questions, and helping them find the right roses for their gardens. I think I personally helped send home at least eight 'Lady of Shallop' roses, calling it the beautiful, bombproof David Austin that started it all for Regan and convinced her to dive deeper into the world of roses.



*Volunteers at Rest-Stop-Ranch in Topsfield, Mass.*



*Onlookers watch Cindy Ehrenreich select a bloom for the show table.*



**June** brought the Annual Rose Show, and what a show it was. Over 1,100 visitors came through, the Midsummer Night's Dream theme sparkled, and our flower crown station alone raised nearly \$600 for the society. Everyone truly leaned into the magic of it, from the fairy garden exhibit to the whimsical arrangements. It was a joyful, high-energy day that reminded us how much beauty and community this society creates.

**July** gave us a slower rhythm. We gathered at Maria's house in Salem for a summer barbecue. John manned the grill, and we spent the afternoon on her back deck sharing food, stories, and plenty of rose talk, just without an agenda. It was easy, relaxed, and one of those gatherings that makes you grateful for the friendships that have grown right alongside the roses.

In **August**, we hosted Soil Sam, our nickname for the incredible speaker, Sam, whose presentation completely captivated us. The material was fresh and deeply informative, offering insights many of us had never encountered before. What was planned as a one-hour talk stretched into two, and it still didn't feel like enough. Sam's passion for soil science and her clear, engaging way of connecting it to rose health had everyone, from new growers to long-time rosarians, scribbling notes and asking questions. It was one of the most memorable and energizing programs we've ever had. After the meeting, Maria, Regan, and I joined Chuck and Diane for a stroll through the gardens at Elm Bank, and we were blown away. There were so many distinct garden rooms: native plantings, sculptures tucked among the beds, and a formal fountain garden that stopped us in our tracks. We did find their rose garden a little lacking, but we'll be revisiting that come spring with the Mass Hort team to see how we can help bring it back to its full potential.



*Maria Connell hosted the July BBQ on her back porch - fun for all ages!*

**September** might have been our busiest month yet. Lobsterfest spanned the whole weekend, from Friday's harbor boat ride and dinner (a wonderful chance to mix and mingle with rose friends from around the region, and who knew Mike Fuss and Rosemary lived in the same town Regan and I grew up in?) to Saturday's rose show, followed by an afternoon spent on the patio of a local tavern before the lobster dinner. It was a relaxed and memorable chance to connect outside the show hall.

Later in the month, Valentina hosted the New England Rose Society at her home for one of our best-attended meetings yet. Her hospitality, cooking, and garden drew a record crowd, including many new members joining us for the first time. That same weekend, our society hosted a booth at the New England Flower Show at Elm Bank, where countless visitors stopped to learn about roses and meet our members. It was a whirlwind weekend that showcased the enthusiasm and growth of our community.



In **October**, we celebrated Founders Day and our collective work on the Save the Ramblers project, a partnership that connects our small but mighty society with an effort to preserve and propagate some of the rarest roses from Anne Belovich's legendary collection in Washington State. Our guest speaker, Teddie Mower, gave an engaging talk about the life of her late mother-in-law, Anne Belovich, how she went from serving as her father's first mate on the fishing boats to becoming a free-spirited academic and, ultimately, a true rose collector. It was fascinating to learn about the multiple avenues the Save the Ramblers project has taken, and the many groups and committees working to preserve her collection and integrate these roses into gardens and even commercial nurseries across the country.



*Founders Day at the Wamsutta Club in New Bedford, MA*



This dedication to preservation extends beyond our own projects too. The Display Garden Initiative, led by Christine and Maria, is bringing new life to a historic public rose garden in Lynn Woods, Massachusetts. Using historic diagrams as their guide, they've begun replanting the space, starting with roses generously donated from Cindy and Irwin's garden. It's a project that perfectly represents the NERS spirit: part restoration, part education, and all heart.

We're thrilled to announce that next year's Annual Rose Show will be themed **Once Upon a Bloom**, a fairytale celebration of roses and imagination.

It's been such a memorable year, one of my favorites so far, though admittedly, I only have two to compare. Still, I think this one will be hard to beat.

Thank you to everyone who's made this year possible, the volunteers, the hosts, the speakers, and every single member who shows up, helps out, and keeps the roses (and the friendships) growing. A special thanks as well to those who opened their homes to us this year, Maria, Regan, Cindy and Irwin, Valentina, Jacqui and Baldo, and Mary and Karl, for their generosity and hospitality in welcoming the society into their gardens and gatherings.

*Teddie Mower has been sending cuttings from Anne Belovich's garden in Washington state throughout the year. Currently we have over 100 cuttings that have taken root.*

*Here's to another year of learning, connection, and the beauty of roses in every shade.*



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