

# Town Gardener

## Roses reign supreme in garden hierarchy

By TOM CAVAN

A rose by any other name would still be a rose. In fact, roses have been recognized since literary records began and the name is the same in many languages. Dried roses have been found in Egyptian tombs, and poetry may even have been the result of the earliest Greek gardeners nurturing that thorny shrub to a picturesque ornamental.

Everyone loves roses whether it be for beauty or fragrance. Their popularity reigns supreme as a garden ornamental and as a floral show piece. Not to mention their power of forgiveness at mending lovers' quarrels.

Roses are plants that require a great deal of attention to attain blue ribbon status. They require sun, good air movement, rich, well drained soil and a preference for a soil PH of 5-6. Roses planted too close to buildings where air circulation is restricted are prone to mildew.

When planting roses, soil preparation is very important. Time has proven that shallow

planting of roses may fare as well as deeply prepared soil for the first year, but in the second year shallow preparation has drastic results. Beds should be worked to a depth of 24", with well rotted manure, peatmoss and a handful of bonemeal worked in. If you have small hands use two handfulls: Thoroughly mix to a consistent texture so as not to impede water and air interaction.

If drainage is a problem the bed should be excavated and 4" of loose gravel placed in the bottom for control or choose another location. Drainage tile can also be used to carry excess water away from the bed.

Planting distance will be determined by variety choice and once again air movement is a controlling factor. Hybrid tea, floribunda and grandiflora rose plants should be spaced no closer than 30". Climbers and ramblers should be a minimum of six feet, but I would recommend ten feet for easier maintenance and a more open growth pattern.

When choosing roses buy only Ontario grown roses. As patriotic

as it may seem, roses from other climates will not overwinter as well.

Dig a hole larger than the root and always twice the depth. Then make a conical mound of soil and spread the roots over the cone of soil. Half fill the hole with soil and water thoroughly. When the water has seeped away fill in the remainder with your mixed soil up to the bud graft or barely on it and water again. The bud graft is easily identified by the swelling and branching that occurs in this area. Any shoots from below the graft must be removed and if any roots were damaged they should be pruned off.

Many nurseries pot roses and the spreading of roots should take place at that time. Therefore, a properly potted rose requires only slashing of the pot and planting at the proper depth. If the canes have not been pruned remove inside, crossing or weak branches so that you promote outward growth.

For more information call the Town Gardener Hotline at 519-833-2117.

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## Zeller's plans "Moonwalk '91"

The Georgetown Zeller's store, part of the Canada-wide department store chain, will participate in "Moonwalk '91", the sixth annual walkathon in aid of Cystic Fibrosis research, Sunday, May 26.

"As part of a continuing programme to help raise money for the Cystic Fibrosis Society of Canada," explained Mr. Terry Oliver, Promotional Resources


manager at Zellers' head office in Montreal, "our stores throughout the country will be organizing walkathons. We hope to have approximately 20,000 participants, so that 240,000 miles will be covered - the distance from the earth to the moon."

"We hope that members of the community at large will join Zellers' employees as 'moonwalkers' or sponsors - or both -

and help make this year's edition of 'Moonwalk' as spectacular a success as in the past. For example, last year's edition raised more than \$630,000, and in 1991, our goal is \$1,000,000 to assist Cystic Fibrosis researchers in their search for a cure."

More information about Moonwalk '91, registration and pledge forms are available at the Customer Service Desk of any Zellers store.

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