

where I put the pots was very uneven and needed some serious work to get it prepared. It didn't take long for weeds to take over between the pots, for pots to fall over because of unlevel ground, so I moved the whole collection to another area and let the goats in to clean out the weeds.

To save myself a lot of work, I called my neighbor who has a backhoe and asked him to come down to fix my problem. He donated about two hours of backhoe work and scraped the area. I now have a nice flat weed-free plot to return the plants to. Next week chips will arrive and I will cover the area with wood chips to help keep the weeds down.

I love my Flori's. The range of colors and blossom types is simply amazing. And then there is 'Shelia McQueen'. If you don't like the color when she first blooms, wait a day or two. She starts out pink, turns yellow and then turns green before she fades away. I was stunned the first time she bloomed as I watched the process.

The Floribundas are so easy even I can keep them going. I have started using mycorrhizae on the roots when I repot and Dr Earth's Rose and Flower Food for regular feeding. It seems to be working. The plants are doing great and making me smile a lot! It has been one of the most rewarding undertakings I have been involved with, not just the Flori's, but helping to save this amazing collection. The older I get the more appreciative I become of things that have stood the test of time. Some of the roses in the TFoVR collection can't be found anywhere else in the country, and some are so rare they can't be found anywhere in the world. If this collection is lost, that may very well be the end of many of these roses, and that would be a tragedy. Last year when we were hit by wild fires, it became horribly clear just how fragile the existence of the TFoVR collection is. "Fostering" them and sharing cuttings and plants with other dedicated individuals and organizations is an excellent method of insuring these wonderful plants continue. ■



'President Herbert Hoover' (photo by D. Nauman)

The Pernetianas

Daniel Nauman

The Vintage Roses Collection of Pernetianas has been relocated to Red Bluff, California—just a couple hundred feet from the Sacramento River. Our large front lawn was already doomed due to years of neglect before we bought the property and to an infestation of Dallas grass—not to mention that I already have about a quarter acre of riverside lawn that requires twice weekly mowing in the summer. Gregg Lowery got wind of the impending lawn removal



'Heinrich Wendland' (top) (photo by D. Schramm);
'Lady Belper' (above); *'Portadown Fragrance'* (right)
(photos by D. Nauman)

and thought Red Bluff, with its dry climate supplemented by a relatively wet dormant season, would be ideal for Pernetianas.

A third of the front lawn had already been removed for sundry uses, such as vegetables, etc. The soil was found to be reasonably malleable, silty clay, low in calcium and nitrogen. The larger section turned out to be much more intractable, due to compaction of the top foot of soil. The top layer has been exhaustively loosened by hand, and hopefully heavy mulch and the proliferation of earthworms will cure its structural woes.

The Pernetianas are fed every other week, rotating between alfalfa pellets and chicken compost. Most of them also get fish emulsion

in between these applications due to their feeble condition when planted. It took several months, but most have responded with new basal canes.

Irrigation is overhead during the wee hours for the time being. This is not ideal in this climate because blossoms literally steam in the hot morning sun. I plan to switch to drip, with occasional overhead, irrigation during dry evenings.

The Pernetianas are planted in a large U-pattern to be walked around, with the center filled with floriferous desert plants in a pallet toward grays, lavender and purple to offset the Pernetianas' predominance of coral, gold and orange.

Due to the extreme summer heat and ultraviolet index in Red Bluff, I'm always on the lookout for Pernetianas that can take such abuse. Some varieties go from bud to exhaustion in but a few morning hours, but a number do stand out by lasting for days: 'Heinrich Wendland' is the champion in this department, but 'Lady Belper', 'Herbert Hoover' and 'Portadown Fragrance' have unusual durability. The latter also has a novel form—it reminds me of a 'Debutante' camellia—and great scent, making it an ideal candidate for commercial revival.

Be sure to follow me on Facebook for near-daily postings of Pernetiana blossoms, and hopefully a beautiful garden once it starts filling in. ■

