

Remembering Red

The first time I really noticed “Red” Collard was at Wrigley Garden. I went there with Norm Nelson to deadhead. As we walked in, Red looked up and said to Norm, “Why do you keep coming down here? You have no idea what you’re doing.” I was shocked, but Norm acted like nothing was wrong. He put his left hand on Red’s shoulder, shook Red’s hand with the other, and they both laughed at their own private joke. Norm later explained to me that this was Red’s sense of humor. The more he liked you, the more insulting the comments he made might be. Some people didn’t get it, too bad for them. I think perhaps Red’s philosophy was, “If you can’t take a joke, that’s your problem.”

I’d run into Red in the parking lot at a rose show. He’d greet me by saying, “Why did you have to show up?” or, “Oh, great, you’re here. I might as well pack up and go home.” I knew this was his way of complementing me. I was flattered that he considered me a worthy competitor, because Red was a really good exhibitor, and he grew beautiful roses. He never bragged. He never pointed to his wins on the trophy table. He never made a big deal out of it. But if Red brought roses to a show, he did make it to the trophy table. I can’t even tell you how many times my best was beaten by an entry put in by Bruce and Carole Collard.

When I started bringing Bob with me to the meetings and shows, he and Red would greet each other with, “Hey, ugly!” He frequently would ask me, “When are you going to dump this bum?” But he and Carole came all the way to Vegas to be at our wedding. When we thanked them for coming, Red said, “I never liked either one of you.”



Bruce (Red) Collard

If Red was your friend, he stood by you – through thick and thin, whether you were right or wrong. He was a good man with a good heart.

Red loved roses. If there was a rose related event, he was there. It didn’t matter what society was putting it on – San Fernando, LA, Pacific, Santa Clarita – Red was there supporting it. Meetings, auctions, shows, conventions Red came to all of them. Early on I was amazed at the number of roses he would buy at an auction. Finally, I asked him what he did with all of them. “Oh, I buy them for the garden at the church.” I don’t know how many gardens Red took care of: his own, the one at his Church, Wrigley, Descanso. He just loved being among roses. If Red could get to an event, feeling good or not so good, he was there.

For years, Red was Mr. Placement at almost every show I went to. And his were the hands I wanted put my roses in. I knew I had a

good entry if he asked, "What do you want put this ugly thing in for?" I knew he would treat my entry with respect. He would put it where it belonged, and he would seek me out if I made a mistake on the tag. I wonder how many novice placement people learned how to do it right from Red?

Everywhere that Red was, Carole was. It was evident to anyone with eyes that they respected and adored each other. The past few years Red had his share of health challenges. Carole has been at his side through them all, cheering him up and cheering him on. I remarked to Chris Greenwood recently that Red was like the Energizer bunny. He just kept coming back. I was hoping he would be able to do it again, but God had other plans for Red this time.

We will all miss him, but I like to think that when Red arrived at the gate to Heaven's garden there was a very large crowd of rose friends waiting to welcome him. And I like to think that they all put their arms around him and laughed when he told them, "I was hoping I wouldn't run into any of you." Red Collard was one of a kind. May he rest in God's love and peace.

Lynn Snetsinger



Fourth of July

Red's Favorite Roses



Julie Newmar



St. Patrick



Belle Story



Gemini