

# Red River Rose Society Newsletter

Volume 1

November 2008

Number 10

**The Red River Rose Society is a local, nonprofit organization affiliated with the ARS and dedicated to the study, enjoyment, enhancement, cultivation, and promotion of the rose.**

## **RRRS Meetings**

The Red River Rose Society meets the third Tuesday of each month (except Jul & Aug) in the Denison Public Library meeting room at 7:00 pm.

If you have questions/concerns about your roses you can email

[rosemedic@cableone.net](mailto:rosemedic@cableone.net) . Your inquiry will be forwarded to an expert for an answer.

“Ask the Expert” will be held from 6:30 to 7:00pm prior to our monthly meeting. Bring your questions, cuttings to share, or just come to cuss & discuss.

**Next RRRS Meeting: Tuesday, November 18th in the Denison Public Library at 7:00. Jack Walters, owner & operator of Walters-Kimbrew Nursery in Saline and Regional Director of the American Rose Society, will be our guest speaker.**

**THERE WILL NOT BE A RRRS MEETING IN DECEMBER!!!**

## **RRRS Roses**

Please complete and return via email or snail mail the form sent to you listing your roses, your comments (optional), and your top ten favorite roses as soon as possible (but by December 15 at the latest). I hope to compile this information to update the section of our RRRS notebook for new and continuing members by our first meeting in January. Let's proudly share our roses and promote our favorites! You can obtain a new form or email your completed form to me at [cmainwak5@verizon.net](mailto:cmainwak5@verizon.net) or [cmainwak5@aol.com](mailto:cmainwak5@aol.com) Thanks!

## **LOOKING AHEAD (tentatively)**

**Jan 20, 2009 – RRRS meeting 7:00 pm. Dr. John Allen, topic is: Grafted vs Own Root Roses.**

**Feb 17, - RRRS meeting. The popular Mark Steljes from Tulsa, probably speaking on anything and everything roses.**

**Mar 17 – RRRS meeting. Claude Graves on: “Growing Easy Tea’s and Easy Hybrid Tea Test Gardens.”**

**April – open.**

**May 19 – RRRS meeting. Mike Becker on the docket.**

**June 16 – RRRS meeting. Owner of Wayside Flowers will give a presentation on Flower Arranging.**

### **Roses for the Librarians**

**Don't forget to bring roses to display at the meeting and for the librarians. Be sure to label each rose with it's name, classification if you know it and your name of course. We will hold a special drawing for a rose from all the participants in this display.**

*Rose Ramblings, "Farmers Branch – City of Roses"*

by Richard McGowan



I couldn't help thinking as we drove back north from Farmers Branch last month how lucky Farmers Branchians are. They're blessed with a municipal government that appreciates the value of impressive public gardens to a community. Their leaders had the foresight to provide the land and at least some of the money that it took to create the sort of horticultural aesthetic touch that's all too rare in North Texas. My fellow passengers and I were jealous and mused about such a possibility in our own communities. When we realized how remote that possibility is, we fell silent on the topic.

That day we had experienced two separate horticultural phenomena. The first was located in Gussie Field Watterworth Park located at 2610 Valley View Lane across from Oran Good Park and near Farmers Branch City Hall. A chill wind cut through us when we arrived and we tended to visit the sunnier beds at first. But we were soon warmed by the immense expanse of roses that stretched before us, and we flitted from bed to bed oohing and aahing as we went. One

spectacular rose was quickly replaced by another; too fast for anyone to decide which was really their favorite.



What we were looking at is the National EarthKind Trial Rose Garden touted as "the flagship of environmental horticultural research for the country". One hundred rose cultivars were being evaluated in four randomized replicated plantings; in other words, each of the four curved beds contained the same varieties but each in a different order so that there was no favoring one variety over another with better sun, wind, or soil exposure.

Carefree Beauty was prominent. The ends of each bed had that robust pink blazing away. Because she is a known performer, she served as a standard against which all the others could be measured. But Carefree Beauty served another purpose too. Pam Smith, Farmers Branch Park Manager, wanted to be sure that, in case all the other roses failed, tax payers would have at least something to catch their eyes as they drove by. A smart lady, I'd say.

I noticed that several planting sites were empty and marked simply by EK numbers. Bill Cashin who had volunteered to help plant these roses last February supplied the answer. He said all the work was done by a small army of volunteers in a very short time, and that some had more planting skill than others. I hope these failures will be noted in evaluating the robustness of each rose, those that can survive inexpert planting skills and those that can't.

As we expected each bed was heavily mulched, probably four inches, with some pretty coarse wood shavings. Bill assured us also that lots of that expanded shale stuff was incorporated in the planting, and each rose was provided with its own private drip irrigator, though our own irrigation expert, Gerald Frimann couldn't figure exactly how they did it. He didn't think they'd

like it if he dug down deep enough to expose the works and find out. But we were tempted.



That kind of set up is expensive and hardly the sort of cost the average North Texas homeowner is going to pay. Though, heaven knows, our compacted clay soil greatly benefits from it, the price of expanded shale is almost out of sight. When will competition and the economy of increasing production ever bring the price down to our earth? And the cost of that drip irrigation system alone must have been the price of a new Camry.

So we didn't feel too bad that most of our roses don't look as good as most of theirs. We're just amateurs with amateur pocketbooks and amateur know-how. In Farmers Branch, Dr. Steve George, Associate Professor and Extension Landscape Specialist with Texas A&M University, and the founder of the EarthKind movement, provided their know-how. Those of us who have met Dr. George know they couldn't have picked better.

Centered between the EarthKind beds were the All-America Rose Selection award winners from 2002. These are a different sort altogether from the EarthKinds. The EarthKinds—for the most part—are better viewed from a distance, but these were worthy of table-top centerpieces. There were recommended by "noted local rosarians" for use in North Central Texas including hybrid teas, floribundas, grandifloras, climbers, miniatures and even some David Austins. These were true beauties, perfect blossoms, glossy foliage, and well-shaped. Some were climbing on huge cross-shaped trellises fashioned from unpeeled cedar poles which supported metal cross-woven panels. It looks as if the climbers will be easily attached with little forcing or tying in. I want to

see those trellises in another year. They should be worth the trip alone.



The second horticultural phenomenon we experienced that day was the Farmers Branch Historical Park. Here were old houses, many of them moved there, surrounded by interesting plants of all kinds. The new antique rose garden in front of the park's 1885 Queen Anne Victorian cottage was a gift to the city from a former president of the Dallas Rose Society. Pam Smith designed the garden and Dr. George assisted with the rose selection. Also, the park participates in the Earthkind Environmental Landscape Program with several beds already planted.

Again the roses were amazing. Here they were more like a real home garden, not so much sun, not so much separation, not so much apparent babying. They looked natural and at home as

decoration and not as specimens.



But what most impressed me there was not a rose. It was a monstrous bur oak that stretched over an 1850's stone ranch house with branches that must have been two feet thick. In those days they don't seem to have been worried about trees growing over houses. I guess in the days before air conditioning in Texas you kept all the shade you could get.

One disappointment. Bill Cashin and I were hoping to find a successful low-growing yellow rose in all these gardens to replace the four Golden Unicorns we planted in front of Eisenhower's statue in Denison four years ago. They were pretty good for a couple of years but last season they didn't flower much and got enough brown leaves to make them look pretty disreputable toward the end despite Bill's best ministrations of chemicals. Well, we didn't find any candidates in Farmers Branch. Any suggestions from readers?

After lunch at a recommended but unmemorable barbecue place, we headed back up the LBJ and 75. Yes, we were envious of what they had in Farmers Branch but it had been a good day for all of us. We saw what could be done, and we felt how far we fell short, both in our own communities and in our own back yards.

But, you know, gardeners always say to themselves "Wait until next year! I'll find the right variety, the right spot, the right spray, the right fertilizer. I just know I will. If they can do it, so can I." Nature never gives up and neither do gardeners. Do they?

# November RRRS Consulting Rosarian's Report

Carole Mainwaring

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## ***In the real world, we garden in microclimates, not hardiness zones.***

Charlie Mazza, Senior Extension Associate, Cornell Univ.

Soon we will be feeling the bite of winter winds and ache of cold, driving rains as we attend to our garden chores. But for now, we can take advantage of any mild fall days left as we begin our preparations for protecting our roses during the winter season. *What to do? When to do it? and Is it really necessary?* are all questions we need answered as we look forward to the winter season in our rose garden.

### **Zones**

It is important to know your garden's USDA Hardiness Zone rating (<http://www.growit.com/bin/USDAZoneMaps.exe?MyState=TX>) when choosing roses which will be suitable for your garden. The eleven zones are based on the average annual minimum temperatures which can be expected over any given winter in each zone. It does not represent the coldest temperature ever reported, however. A record breaking cold spell can damage or kill plants that are recommended for your zone. I have kept my own temperature and rainfall records since 2004 for my rose garden in Ravenna, TX and recommend that you do the same. My records show that below freezing temperatures come as early as November for me with Nov. temperatures as low as 22.5 degrees F. I have recorded temperatures as low as 7.5 degrees F. in December, 18.5 degrees F. in January, 10.8 degrees in February, 21.7 degrees in March, and 31.5 degrees in April. These low readings make me a believer in providing some type of winter protection for my roses that lack winter hardiness.

### **Microclimates**

Microclimates are climates that affect a small area that is different from the area around it. This can be caused by planting roses next to a fence that provides a wind break, next to a white building that reflects heat and sunlight, or planting in a low spot in your yard where colder air might settle. A microclimate is any place in your garden that is warmer or colder, wetter or drier, or more or less prone to frosts, freezes, and excessive heat. Because I have a yard that slopes, the beds at the lower end of my garden are wetter and colder. I will see frost form on roses in these beds first. Since my open garden is in the country with pastures and dirt roads around it, it receives more damage from colder temperatures and icy winds in winter. There is a lack of cement radiating heat near my garden and no wind protection from urban housing and fences. My garden experiences many mornings of heavy dew in the spring and fall and morning shade from trees. These conditions can put high disease pressure on my roses. My roses bloom later in the spring than roses in the Dallas metroplex and need more protection from winter damage because of a lack of structures, concrete, and other city conditions that moderate extremely cold temperatures. Take a good look at the microclimates in your rose garden and compare them to your zone map. Also, compare them to what you are hearing and reading about winter preparation from other rosarians. It could be that the rosarian from Dallas who uses no winter protection would quickly change his/her mind if growing roses lacking winter hardiness in our microclimates!



to by C. Mainwaring)

There are a number of roses that have been developed for winter hardiness. Some of these varieties possess the ability to convert water to a form that doesn't freeze making the variety extremely hardy. One hybridizer of winter hardy roses was Dr. Griffith Buck from Iowa. His roses can be purchased from Chamblee's Rose Nursery (<http://www.chambleerose.com/>) and include many roses that are being tested in the EarthKind Rose Research Program. One very popular Buck rose is Carefree Beauty. A number of new hardy roses have been released, also, through two Canadian breeding programs over the past 20-30 years. The "Explorer Series" and "Parkland Series" were developed by Agriculture Canada in Ontario. The developers of these roses intended that they be grown on their own roots so that if their tops were killed by winter cold, they'd be able to send out suckers from their roots in spring and flower on new growth that summer. One recommended rose from the Explorer Series is William Baffin. Other hardy roses include albas, Rosa rugosa and Rosa multiflora.

### **Fall Clean Up and Winter Protection**

Winter survival of less hardy roses depends not only on the weather. It also depends on the health of your bush. A sickly bush will be easily killed by fluctuating temperatures and icy winds, so continue to keep your roses well sprayed and watered. Fungicides may be needed throughout the winter if days are mild and disease pressure is high. Stop applying fertilizers six weeks to two months before the average date of your first killing frost. The reported average date of the first fall frost for me is Nov. 16, but I have seen it come much earlier. (<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/extension/homeguide/frostfall.html>) Also quit trimming and deadheading to allow all the new growth to mature and harden off properly so the bush can go dormant during the first weeks of freezes. You want to prevent the sap from rising to form new tender growth. If the sap freezes during a cold spell, the plant will be damaged or killed. Your bushes may begin producing hips now which will help signal the bush to stop its reproductive cycling and go dormant.

My choice for winter protection is to use a 2-4 inch layer of mulch over the entire bed and, then, pile new soil and/or mulch around the crown of the rose up to 10-12 inches in height. I don't use a newspaper collar around the bush, but many rosarians do. This collar is described on the following website: (<http://davesgarden.com/guides/articles/view/209/>) I do this hilling after I rake out all the fallen leaves and debris that are in the rose bed. I pile the soil and/or mulch around the base of each rose bush after a couple of hard freezes have occurred or by Dec. 15. This date is probably arbitrary on my part but does force me to get things done before I get too busy with the holidays. Use a mulch which will not become heavy and soggy causing new problems. In the past I have used straw to cover the entire bed. One drawback to this was having to remove all the old, musty straw in the springtime. After uncovering two nests of baby snakes and several of mice one spring, I quit using straw! I do not use rose cones or boxes as the weather just hasn't gotten cold enough to warrant this added effort in my garden. I am avoiding composts and manures unless I am absolutely certain that no residual long-lasting herbicides are contained in them.

In January I spray all the dormant rose bushes, the mulch in the beds, and fruit trees in the yard with lime-sulfur spray. I use a hose end sprayer that I discard once this task is completed because the mixture clogs the sprayer quite easily. Be sure to wear protective clothing and face gear (goggles and mask) when spraying and do this on a calm, dry day above 40 degrees F. This dormant spray kills many of the insect eggs and fungal spores that are over-wintering in the yard.

I always cut a few of the extremely long rose canes back just enough so that the canes don't whip around in the wind and break or drag the bush over on its side. This pruning is minor since I don't want to encourage the bush to grow new stems and canes causing the sap to rise and then freeze. Freezing of water inside the plant's cell walls may result in the cells bursting and dying. At the same time, I cut out dead or dying growth and bag or burn it. I do not compost any fallen rose leaves or dead canes.

The miniature roses that I grow in large, self-watering pots are wrapped with three sealed bags of mulch held in place with a bungee cord. This keeps me from having to move the pots to a warmer site and still allows me to reach the reservoir in the pot with a hose to fill with water. I cover the top of the pot with mulch. Smaller pots could be brought into a garage and watered there. Some rosarians group potted roses in a sheltered area of their yard, cover them with leaves or mulch, and water them there as needed all winter. Do not fertilize until after you do your spring pruning.

To help prevent moisture loss due to cold, drying winds in the winter, you can spray an antitranspirant which will coat the canes. Wilt-Pruf or Cloud Cover are two such products. This will substantially reduce water loss in the canes. Think ChapStick for roses!

My rose garden on March 4, 2008 after a 9 inch snowfall!



## Roses Grown by the Red River Rose Society Members

October, 2009

Please help us update our list of all roses grown by the Red River Rose Society members. This list will then be distributed to new and continuing members with the goal of aiding members in their search for new roses to grow in their own gardens. To make this task as easy as possible, you are requested to:

- list all the roses you grow,
- make comments about each one **only** if you wish to do so and have the time, AND
- list your top ten favorite roses.

You can complete this form and snail mail it to:

Carole Mainwaring  
773 CR 2045  
Ravenna, TX 75476

**OR**

you can email the form to me at:

[cmawak5@verizon.net](mailto:cmawak5@verizon.net)  
[cmawak5@aol.com](mailto:cmawak5@aol.com)

Thank you for your help!

Name of Rose	Comments (Optional)
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Please continue on separate pages for additional roses.

**My list of the top ten roses I grow.**

# 1 Favorite Rose	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Favorite Rose	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Favorite Rose	
4 <sup>th</sup> Favorite Rose	
5 <sup>th</sup> Favorite Rose	
6 <sup>th</sup> Favorite Rose	
7 <sup>th</sup> Favorite Rose	
8th Favorite Rose	
9 <sup>th</sup> Favorite Rose	
10 <sup>th</sup> Favorite Rose	