



*Roses on the Red*  
Red River Rose Society

A local, nonprofit organization affiliated with the American Rose Society (ARS) and dedicated to the study, enjoyment, enhancement, cultivation and promotion of the Rose.

<http://redriverrosesociety.com>

<http://www.ars.org>

2009 and 2010 ARS Bulletin Contest Gold Medal Winner

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## President's Corner

Sandra Haynes

Spring has sprung and hopefully the freezing nights are no more! So many bulbs in my gardens have nipped foliage and damaged blooms. We can hope that next year the winter will stay cold then go away and we will have fruit on our trees and better early spring flowers. I wonder if there is a frost free dance we can do now!

I have been reading about a method of feeding the soil and the roses that appeals to me. After pruning or planting a rose or any other plant, first spread a layer of compost one inch thick around and between the plants and then a couple of inches of mulch. The compost will protect the soil from the unfinished mulch leaching nitrogen from the soil. The idea is healthy soil produces healthy plants (roses). This makes a lot of sense to me. This idea came from Paul Zimmerman's book, Everyday Roses. Then he suggests, if you wish, adding slow release



Francis Dubreuil- OGR very fragrant

granular fertilizer (to last for four months) and reapply the slow release granular fertilizer (to last for two months) in September.

At our April program, Barb Palmer is going to talk about roses and how they can contribute to our table in another way than bouquets with their fragrance and beauty, but in a culinary way. You do not want to miss this program.

Our RRRS dinner on April 15<sup>th</sup> will be at the Jalapeno Tree on Morton Road, Denison. It is west of Walmart. The room will not be separate from all the diners, but I think we will enjoy the change in the cuisine.

**On April 15<sup>th</sup>**

**We will meet at the Denison Library**

**At 6:30 pm**

**Our speaker is Barb Palmer**

**From Sweet Water Farms**

**Her presentation is:**

**Eating your roses**

**At 4:45 pm we will dine at**

**The Jalapeno Tree on Morton Road**

**(Next to the Wal-Mart)**

Did you



know?

In the Garden

Edward Killingworth Johnson

Throughout history many civilizations celebrated with roses and created beautiful rose gardens. In Edwardian England rose parties were very popular. These parties were held in the spring every day, in the mornings, afternoons, evenings, all day, or well into the night. Roses at the dawn parties were fresh, dewy, fragrant, and full of beauty. Roses by moonlight offered a greater pleasure with the petals appearing as unusual colors, the fragrance seemed sweeter, richer, and more soothing. Rose parties during the day were accompanied with tea and pastries.

The 'rose fete' at Mr. Bohn's Twickenham home as recorded in the *Gardener's Chronicle* had 200 to 300 guests that admired his roses some thousands in number. No one knows for sure how many gardeners were required to care for the roses. But you can be sure Mr. Bohn did not prune his own roses.



## **THE FULL SCOOP ABOUT FERTILIZERS**

This article was contributed by Henry Simpson with permission from the Marin Rose Society in California, by Nanette Londeree, Master Rosarian

“You are what you eat,” or so the saying goes. As much as you love chocolate, think what you’d be like if that’s all you ate!

Plants, like people, thrive on a well-balanced diet. Imagine you’re on a tropical island, and your kitchen (your only source of food) is stocked with a huge variety of fruits, vegetables and nuts, meat, fish, poultry and dairy, everything you’ll need to stay healthy - for a month. You’ve also got oodles of boxes of corn flakes. You

can't leave the island to get any more food – you have to subsist only on what's in your island kitchen. You'll do great for that first month, but after that? Cornflakes three times a day, every day with no reprieve? While it may be enough to keep you going, it's not likely to keep you filled with energy and healthy enough to fight off disease after a few months. Guess what? Your roses aren't any different. Both you and your roses need an array of nutrients to be at your best.

Growing healthy roses that produce bountiful blooms and are able to fend off disease require the basics of light, moisture, air and nutrients. You take care of the light and air when choosing an appropriate planting location, and supplement Mother Nature for needed moisture and nutrients through irrigation and fertilizing. Providing the right amount of water at the right time is essential to healthy plants; similarly, ensuring that the right nutrients are present and available to the plant when they're needed is just as important.

We gardeners routinely describe fertilizing as “feeding” our plants, but that's not really accurate. Plants “feed” themselves, producing their own food in the form of sugars through the process of photosynthesis. We add plant nutrients, those chemical

elements necessary for plant growth, to supplement those naturally occurring in the soil. In a forest under natural conditions, fallen leaves and dead plants slowly decay; they continually replace nutrients taken up by living plants and provide a steady, balanced level of nutrients. That same cycle of continual replacement isn't generally available to cultivated plants without our intervention. Even if you're lucky enough to start with great garden soil, as your roses grow, they absorb and remove nutrients from the soil leaving it less fertile. By adding materials to the soil through fertilizing, you're making the desired nutrients available to the plant.

So how do you decide what to feed your soil? Roses have the undeserved reputation of being demanding plants that need lots of fertilizer. That's not necessarily the case. While it's likely you'll get bigger flowers and more of them by adding key nutrients, in general, they don't need lots of supplemental nutrients to be healthy and bloom. What fertilizers you use, and when you use them depends on what do you want from your plants along with the nature of the soil and the environmental conditions they are growing in. As an example, an avid rose exhibitor is likely to have a more aggressive fertilizing program, providing greater quantities

of nutrients more frequently than the gardener who's happy with simply flowerful plants. Roses planted in a shady location grow more slowly, absorbing nutrients at a lower rate than those planted in full sun, so don't need to be replenished frequently. A young, developing rose plant with few leaves won't use some nutrients as quickly as a fully mature plant would, but may need others in order to develop a strong root system. Other considerations when choosing a fertilizer include the cost of the material, the ease of use, and any potential impact on it may have on the environment.

Back to a balanced diet. Plant nutrients can only do their job if the other basic requirements for growth are met – adequate light, air and water. Fertilizers not only won't help plants growing in water-logged or moisture-deprived soil, they can actually end up damaging plants. Over-dosing with some nutrients like nitrogen can burn tender roots and foliage and stimulate excessive new growth that actually attracts sucking insect pests like aphids. Once again, adding the right material at the right time can give you the results you desire.

There are plenty of products you can buy at your local garden center, but not all valuable fertilizers come in a bag or bottle.

Ever tossed used coffee grounds around the base of a potted plant, or dug banana peels into the soil? Mixed a scoop of wood ashes in when planting a new rose? Top-dressed the soil with worm castings? All these serve as fertilizer by providing nutrients to the soil as they break down, but cost little to nothing, and can provide some nutritional benefits.

In the coming months, we'll explore the world of plant nutrients, fertilizers and feeding both your soil and your roses, clarify what a fertilizer is and what it does, look at the myriad types of available fertilizers, consider the many options of how and when to fertilize, delve into amendments and additives, and identify some nutritional deficiencies that may plague your plants and options to remedy them. Next time, we'll focus on basic plant needs and growing conditions.

Now, where should I put those coffee grounds?

## Coming Events

Dedication of Anne Belovich Rambler Garden  
Saturday, May 3, 2014  
Rose Dango  
Chambersville Rose Gardens

8:00 AM – the Gardens open

9:00 AM – Pamela Greenewald, Angel Gardens, Alacha, Florida

10:00 AM – Anne Belovich, western Washington State, Has the largest collection of rare and unusual ramblers

11:00 AM – Anne Belovich Rambler Garden Dedication

11:30 – 2:00 Lunch and Break. Box lunch available (\$5.00 with advance registration, \$6.00 day of the event). With time to visit the gardens and vendors.

2:00 PM – Dr William Welch, Author of: Antique Roses for the South, Perennial Garden Color, Heirloom Gardening in the South and a rose rustler.

3:00 PM – Chris Wiesinger, Owner of Southern Bulbs Company, Golden, TX. and a bulb rustler with Dr. Welch.

There will be a Mexican Dinner at 5:00 PM (\$15:00 with advance registration, \$20.00 day of the event).

To register/reserve meals, please call Barbara Villarreal at 972-837-4223, or email <http://www.rosedango.com>

# The Red River Rose Society

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**Consulting Rosarians** are rose growers who have met the qualifications set by the ARS and are there to help you with your rose growing questions. Call on them when you have a need!

**Disclaimer** – The advice and information presented in *Roses on the Red* are believed to be true and accurate, but its Editor, the Red River Rose Society nor any Member thereof can accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. The Red River Rose Society makes no warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein.

**Subscriptions** are available through membership in the Society. Membership is available to any person interested in growing roses. The newsletter is published 4 times a year and is emailed to all members. Monthly meetings are held in the Denison Public Library, 300 W Gandy, Denison, TX 75020 (903-465-1797) at 6:30pm.

**Dues** are \$20.00 per household per calendar year and checks made out to the River Red Rose