Vol. XLVII, No. 8

Patsy Williams, Editor

August 2010

# This Month's Meeting

Thursday **August 12, 2010** 

## Companion Plants Natasha Schischakin

**7:30 pm**Garden Center
Hermann Park

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Water, Water, Water!

## **Companion Plants for Your Rose Garden**

Natasha Schischakin, is the manager of the tree, shrub, and rose departments at Buchanan's Native Plants and will be speaking to our members on *Companion Plants for your Rose Garden*. Natasha is also considered one of Buchanan's birding experts, and is responsible for the technical design of the nursery's website, electronic newsletter and their plant information database. The Board of the Houston Rose Society would like to thank both Natasha and Buchanan's for donating a set of pruners and leather rose gloves as door prizes to be raffled at the August Meeting, and another generous donation from them at last month's meeting, which included a set of ice cream bowls, from their gift shop and two rose bushes. If you are interested in learning what plants grow well with your roses, and want a chance to win pruners or rose gloves, this is one meeting that you will not want to miss!

**Consulting Rosarian for August is Robin Hough.** Bring your rose questions.

**Feature of the Month: Arrangement:** A Standard or Miniature arrangement. Names of roses and type of arrangement (Line, Mass, Abstract, Moribana, etc.) must be on entry tag.

SPECIAL: 7:00 pm, Beginner's Corner: James Laperouse will discuss gardening techniques to produce Fall blooms.



## What Good Rosarians Are Doing in August

The most important thing that you can do for your roses this month is to get or keep them **h e a l t h y.** A healthy rose bush in August produces large beautiful blooms for you in the fall.

Water is one way to help your bushes stay healthy. Two to three inches of water a week is necessary to promote new growth and to sustain the growth that is already on the plant. DO NOT be misled by a brief afternoon shower (if you are fortunate enough to have gotten one). A light watering is sometimes more harmful than no water at all. Be sure to soak the beds when you water. Water more than once a week. Watering a dry bed is like watering a dry pot: the water runs out around the edges before the soil can soak it up.

Potted plants might need to be watered twice a day when temperatures reach 90 and above. When a plastic pot is exposed to the heat, it absorbs the heat and dries out the soil. Be sure that the soil is thoroughly wet. It may be necessary to set the pot in a shallow pan of water until it absorbs enough water to thoroughly moisten the soil.

## **Feeding**

Organics are always a good choice to apply in August. They are slow-release fertilizers that work with your soil. Alfalfa pellets, manure, various "meals," etc., are good entrees for roses. Organics also add valuable microbes and enzymes to the soil. An active soil is usually a healthy soil. Earthworms are hard at work carrying the organics down into the root zone of the plant. Organics applied in August are "icing on the cake" in October, bringing about good foliage and beautiful blooms.

In late August to early September, we should be applying our <u>last</u> granular (dry) fertilizer application. This will give the fertilizer time to break down and become usable to the rose, and still allow the rose time to harden-off before the winter. This is very important! A rose that goes into winter with too much lush new growth is an easy target for a freeze.

Soluble fertilizers, however, may be used until about mid-October. They are readily available to the plant, and do not have the same waiting period as do granular fertilizers. Additives to soluble fertilizers may include: fish oil emulsion, Sprint (a chelated iron) and/or Epsom salt. Any or all of the above can be added. A mixture will give your roses a big boost.

**Alfalfa Tea:** another way to feed your roses. In a 30 gallon plastic garbage can:

- Add 10-12 cups of alfalfa pellets
- Fill with water (cover tightly)
- Steep for two or three days
- Stir occasionally

Apply a gallon of tea around each standard rose, or one-third gallon to each mini. Refill the garbage can, and use the same alfalfa to make another batch.

A soluble fertilizer, Sprint (chelated iron), fish oil emulsion, and/or Epsom salt (any or all of the above) can be added to the alfalfa tea, if you feel it is needed.

#### **Spraying**

One of the duties that we have as rosarians is to spray our roses with a fungicide every **seven** days. Spraying should be done in the **early** morning or **late** evening, and plants should be well watered before spraying. Some rosarians will spray the plants with the water hose to cool them down before applying a fungicide.

#### **Blackspot treatment:**

- Funginex, @ 1 Tablespoon per gallon, and
- A Maneb product, such as Fore or Mancozeb, either used alone or added to Funginex, if persistent blackspot exists. (Funginex is a preventive, and the Maneb product is a curative. The two together help to eradicate blackspot.) Spraying should be done every five days for three or four sprayings to eradicate blackspot, and then return to your regular spray program.

There are other fungicides that last for two weeks after you get your bushes clean: Honor Guard and Compass.

Be sure to spray both the bottom and the top sides of the leaves. By spraying the bottom first, the top will require less material to cover since a lot of the top will be wetted while spraying the bottoms of the leaves.

#### Insecticides:

Any spraying of an insecticide should be done with extreme caution during the hot days of August. Most insecticides contain an oil-based carrier and are likely to cause leaf burn during hot weather.

## **Spider mites:**

Make weekly checks for spider mites. Check the undersides of the leaves for these little critters when you notice a slight discoloring on the topside of leaves. They multiply very fast, and are very destructive.

One treatment is to blast the undersides of the leaves with a very high pressure water spray every other day for a week or so. A pistol grip sprayer on the end of the water hose will work, if you are not fortunate enough to have a Jet-All water wand. This effort will break the life cycle, and reproduction cannot occur unless the mites are on the plants.

An alternate treatment is more costly: Spray with AVID, a miticide (1/4 teaspoon per gallon). Miticides are more effective when used alone. If spider mites are present – choose your weapon!

#### **Garden spiders:**

These are beneficial spiders. While they are a nuisance to us when we walk through their webs, they help to control many of our insect pests. When the webs stretch out across our paths, they are looking for food and they find it.

**Avid Exhibitors**. The last days of August will find serious exhibitors beginning to cut back a few canes at a time on those slow-to-repeat bushes such as *Uncle Joe*. Limit your cutting back to those few heavy petaled bushes, and just continue with regular grooming on the rest of the bushes for a short while longer.

Some rosarians will simply continue to cut back as the roses bloom out so that, regardless of

the weather, they will have some nice blooms for the shows, although perhaps not as many as the rosarian who tries to time grooming by cutting back within a certain number of days before the show.

With either method, exhibitors will make cuts a little deeper; that is, cutting back to the second or third previous growth. Generally it is good to cut back to good eyes on canes in the 3/8 to 1/2 inch diameter, so that the resulting growth will produce the 'exhibition' size cane and bloom that is desired for exhibiting.

## Grooming

The removing of spent blooms encourages the bush to keep producing blooms. The removal of unwanted growths, blind shoots, twiggy canes, etc., allows for stronger cane growth, opens the center of the bush allowing for more air circulation, and removes breeding places for spider mites.

#### Mulch

Check the mulch on your rose beds. Retain at least a two inch layer at all times. Mulch can be your best friend in the rose garden. It adds humus to the soil as it decomposes, keeps down weeds, cools the feeder roots and also gives a nice appearance to the beds.

#### **Protection**

Avoid the heat and sun as much as you can. Be sure to use protection against the sun with a SPF 15 or higher on all areas exposed to the sun. Apply protection, even if you plan to be in the yard for only a short time. The suns rays will affect you even on a cloudy day.

Don't forget the insect repellent! Mosquitoes are working overtime.

## Product sale - plan ahead!

Reminder: Check products that you have on hand to see what you will be needing for next year. You can save money by buying ahead. The order will be in next month's newsletter.

**Volunteer** - This is the time of year that officers are nominated and committees are formed. What is your expertise?



## **Maximizing Fall Bloom**

by Barry Schlueter

By trying we can easily learn to endure adversity—another man's, I mean.

-Mark Twain

Adversity at this writing is called weather because Adversity at this writing is called weather because we are floundering in a meteorological nightmare. Last summer we had a record number of tropical cyclones. They were followed by a record cold winter with little rain. And now we are in the midst of record heat and drought. Can locusts be far behind?

We who garden as a hobby are ready to consider stamp collecting and other indoor hobbies not dependent on the weather. However, more pleasant weather will arrive by October or so, roses and people will be happier, and we can act in July and August to enhance the rose crop at that time.

If you are an avid rose exhibitor, you likely have a plan to maximize fall bloom quality. For you normal folks, following are some ways to improve your fall crop.

During the first two weeks of August, do some serious grooming of plants. If you do it all at once, you'll have no flowers for at least five weeks, so consider doing this grooming over a period of up to four weeks. This yields at least some flowers throughout August, September, and October, with a bountiful crop in October and November.

Grooming in August consists of the following steps.

Remove diseased foliage from plants and diseased litter from the ground beneath them. This is especially important if blackspot has been a problem.

Remove all brown, diseased, or discolored canes completely. If your garden has a history of cane damage like canker, dip the shears in rubbing alcohol between cuts.

Remove most stems having a diameter smaller than a pencil. There are exceptions to this because many floribundas and some hybrid teas/grandifloras rarely produce wood that big. Just eliminate weak growths unlikely to produce good blooms. And newly planted bushes should be groomed more lightly than older ones.

Reduce the height of excessively tall canes as desired to give the plant a more uniform appearance. However, this is not February; do not prune plants as severely as we do that month unless you want to severely shorten the life span of your bushes.

A word of caution is appropriate here. If you have not managed disease well this summer, doing August grooming as described could mean removal of all foliage from some plants. Bad idea in August.

This could damage or even kill a plant this time of year, so groom such plants a little at a time over a period of weeks being sure to leave some foliage after cutting. If the plant is already leafless, you have nothing to lose by cutting it all at once.

Whether or not you have sprayed fungicides regularly, begin to return to a scheduled fungus-control program at this time. Do not spray rose foliage with an insecticide. Ever. In my humble opinion. Certainly it is desirable to control thrips and such by misting buds and blooms (only) with Orthene as needed.

Fertilizing is important, of course. By August it is a good idea to renew soil heath with applications of a cup or so of gypsum, perhaps a half cup of Epsom salt (per plant in the ground, in both cases) and some organic matter like manure, alfalfa, or fish products. Then apply your granular food of choice. An iron supplement can be applied to the benefit of too-light foliage. Remember to water before and after all fertilizer applications.

You can supplementally apply Miracle-Gro or other such water-soluble products every other week if you have ample time and money. In hot weather it is safest to apply it to soil only, not to foliage These supplements do produce finer foliage and flowers.

Almost certainly your mulch has been depleted by August. Reapply mulch to give a total depth of about four inches. It is important for lots of reasons; just do it.

And whatever else you do or don't do, water frequently, being sure each plant gets 2 to 4 inches of water per week during the growing season. Buy/use a rain gauge; don't assume an afternoon shower is providing ample water.

When the crop comes in, you will have exceptional beauty to share with others.

(Editor's note: This article appeared several years ago. It was received so well, that I am printing it as it was. I could not have said it any better.)



# Rose of the Month Ray Still

by Robin Hough

This month I'd like to feature a rose that I actually hybridized myself. "Ray Still" is a cross between an unnamed seedling and the single miniature, "Halo Today." It is a medium red miniflora with lots of petals, in contrast to its Papa. The petals have a rich velvety texture. "Ray Still" tends to bloom one bloom per stem, but it also can bloom in small clusters. The foliage is



dark green and semi-glossy, and the flowers have a slight fragrance. The blooms can have exhibition form, and the open blooms are gorgeous, but this rose stands out as an excellent garden variety and will catch your eye from a distance. The bush grows about one to two feet tall on its own roots and tends to be bushy and somewhat spreading. Good disease resistance is another plus.



In case you're wondering where the name came from, Ray Still was the principal oboist of the Chicago Symphony for forty years and was one of my teachers--all in all, a great musician, teacher and person. He was *very* excited to have this rose named for him. "Ray Still" is sold by Kimbrew-Walter Roses, both as own-root and on fortuniana rootstock (no, I don't make any money if you buy it!). The rose folks I know who grow this bush think highly of it, so it's not just me. I think "Ray Still" can make some beautiful music in your garden.

## Next month - Product Order

Our product order sheet will be in next month's newsletter. Take inventory of your chemicals and fertilizers, now. Be prepared to place your order when you receive the September newsletter. The deadline for orders will be October 9, 2010, and the pickup date will be November 6, 2010 from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. This is the only day that your order will be available for pick-up. Mark your calendar NOW! If you cannot pick up on that day, enlist someone to do it for you.

This is a service which we offer to our members at discounted prices. You **must pick up your order** on this day; <u>no orders are mailed</u>. We hope that you will find that this is worth your while.

## **Roses In Review**

Roses In Review is a national program where we, as rose growers, evaluate roses from a given list of newer roses. We need everyone to check the list published in the July/August *American* Rose, and evaluate only the roses which you now grow. Don't evaluate ones that you have seen growing somewhere else.

The American Rose Society publishes annually a *Handbook for Selecting Roses*. This book gives us the ratings that rates roses in commerce. Your participation helps to set those ratings. These ratings allow us to buy roses with higher ratings.

Whether you report on <u>one</u> or <u>many</u>, all reports are important to get accurate ratings. Go to <u>www.ars.org</u> and fill out your report electronically. You will have to register the first time. If you need to come back and finish at a later time, you will not have to register again.

For those who do not have access to a computer, you can send in paper reports. Make as many copies of the evaluation sheet as you need. Our RIR coordinator is Robin Hough,

915 Oak Vista Ct, Friendswood, TX 77546.

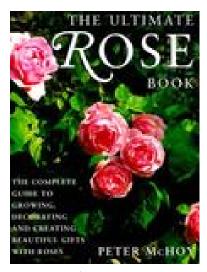


## **HRS Library Corner**

by Maria Trevino

The Ultimate Rose Book, by Peter McHoy, is a comprehensive guide to growing roses, decorating with roses, and a wonderful collection of craft projects.

For anyone who loves roses, this book is a treasure trove of rose information. The book is divided into three sections. The first section, "Rose Care and Cultivation," covers the history of the rose, and practical advice on growing roses, including planting, pruning, and routine rose care. The author covers hybrid teas, floribundas,



shrubs, climbers, and miniatures. The book is filled with excellent photographs of rose varieties and ideas for planting schemes around the garden and in containers.

The section "Decorating with Roses," contains detailed instructions on drying roses, including the equipment and techniques to be used in the process. This is followed by projects using fresh or dried roses. Several cute variations of centerpieces and wreaths are explained step-by-step and good photographs, and critical steps are included. Rose arrangements in different containers can certainly give you some great ideas for our next Rose Show arrangement competition.

Lastly, the "Rose Crafts" section shows inspirational ideas for crafts that can be done by the novice and also the advanced crafter. How about adding dried rose petals around the sides of purchased candles? Or making rose and pressed flower gift wrap and rose gift tags? There are recipes for rose potpourri, rose pomander, rose scented bags and little scented cushions. You can learn to decorate hair pins, hats and head bands. And if you want to spend time in the kitchen, you will find recipes for body lotions, hand creams; and, in the food department, teas, punches, breads, and candies. I plan to try the rose-petal honey.

This book is full of the fun type of rose projects we need to do during the hot weather. Give it a read, and try some of the crafts.

You can check out this and many other books from the HRS library during our monthly meetings. Rose books make great summer reading!

## **Propagation Clinic At Cornelius Nursery**

Fall is the time when we think about rooting rose cuttings – in fact, cuttings rooted in the fall typically are more successful than those rooted at other times. The HRS and Cornelius Nursery (Voss Road store only) will be hosting a rose propagation clinic on Saturday, October 16<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. This hands-on <u>free</u> clinic will demonstrate several methods of rooting cuttings, and attendees will get an opportunity to do-it-yourself under the supervision of the HRS' master propagators. Each attendee will leave with a prepared and potted cutting.

This program will **only** be presented at the Cornelius Nursery located at 2233 South Voss. Directions: From I-10 West, exit Voss and turn left. From US 59 South, exit Hillcroft and turn right on Hillcroft (Hillcroft becomes Voss). The nursery is between the intersections of Westheimer and San Felipe.

## **Growing Roses in Summer**

by Baxter Williams

Growing roses in the summer months is quite easy. Here is what you should do: Read, and do, the suggestions found on Pages 1 and 2 of this Rose-Ette newsletter. They will essentially tell you to (1) water the rose bushes regularly, and (2) keep the leaves on them. Feeding the bushes, and killing or preventing insect damage, is good, but the bushes can usually get along pretty well if you just water well and use a preventive fungicide (of course if you already have blackspot, you'll need to apply a fungus-killer such as Mancozeb, as well. Here is a little tip: Blackspot is produced where weather is hot and humid, like in your shoes. You never see "athlete's finger.").

"That's all?" Yep.

You might consider another facet of rose horticulture. If you roses seem to be growing weaker, there might be some difficulty in the root zones. After watching some good bushes die, we dug them up to re-work the soil in that bed. And there they were – roots. Tree roots, and lots of them! Now, mind you, this rose bed is 50-feet away from the oak trees, but those oak roots came up into the bed, and grew another 30-feet to its far end. The end of one of the tree roots had a diameter the size of the base of my thumb. Folks, those were "killer" roots. It is absolutely true that tree roots can be as long as 1.5 times the height of the tree. Here is what we did to remedy the situation.

Three feet from the tree end of the bed we cut a 15-foot long slot through the sod, and perpendicular to the centerline of the bed. Then I jammed a square-bladed shovel down through the slot (about 12-inches) into the soil, until its top was level with the top of the sod. In the process of doing so, roots were encountered. Those that weren't cut by the shovel blade were subsequently sawed into using an old pruning saw. The bed now has 3-feet of reprieve. We'll see how long it takes the tree to grow its roots back into the bed. In the meantime, we'll do some serious watering and judicious feeding to see if we can bring the bushes back to health.

We have been seeing large leaflet and bud damage caused by obviously large creatures. The rabbits can be countered by using a live trap and some bait. It has been suggested that we cover the trap except for its open door, since rabbits seem to favor darkened areas. With the pesky rabbits gone, perhaps the miniature rose bushes will no longer have their canes cut off at night.

When leaflets are entirely gone, we usually find those 1-inch long caterpillars somewhere on the plant. They clamp onto the edge of the leaflet from both sides, and eat it away down to the petiole.

When buds have been wholly or partially eaten away, we look for the larger insects, such as grasshoppers or katydids. Since it is quite difficult to kill these large insects with insecticides, they are nevertheless fairly easily caught. When one is located on the bush, I wiggle two fingers of my left hand in front of the insect to gain its attention, while sneaking my right thumb and forefinger around behind it, and grab it by pinching its wings together. The Felco pruner then takes off its head.

One more thing: Do you want good blooms in the fall? Then cut your stems to the right diameters. The next stem growth will then be the size of the stem which you cut. Cut the heavier petaled roses about 7-weeks before the show date, and those with fewer petals at 6-weeks. And apply water, and food, and fungicide. See you on the Show Tables.

Ours is a wonderful hobby. We are fortunate to experience some of the most beautiful flowers known to mankind. When we learn the correct horticultural practices, we then are in perfect shape to share our hobby with others. Tell others about your experience with our Society, and invite them to join. It is what a good friend would do.

Overheard: "I have just about gotten rid of blackspot. Only those bushes with foliage still have it."



## **Society Potpourri**

#### LAST MONTH'S MEETING

Our ice cream came from Marble Slab. Thanks to our members who brought goodies to go with the ice cream.

## Winners of the Wacky Competition

- 1. Largest Single Blackspot Penny Pressler
- 2. The Odd Couple Robin Hough
- 3. Yellow Leaves of Texas no entries
- 4. Brownest Bloom J/D Laperouse
- 5. Most Spent Blooms on a Single Cane -

B/P Williams

A special thanks to our vendors who took the time to bring useful items for our consideration and participation:

Maria's Designs Buchannan's RCW Tomboy Tools

Donations for door prizes were given by:

<u>Maria's Designs</u> - baseball cap with rose decal,

RCW - Corona pruners,

<u>Buchannan's</u> - two roses, *Scentimental* and *Souv. de St. Anne's*, and a set of ice cream bowls.

Join us this month as we get back to growing roses.

#### **HRS Events Calendar**

Mark your calendar - updates made monthly

Aug 12 •HRS Meeting -Companion Plants

Aug 20-22 National Miniature Rose Show and

Conference - Milwaukee, WI

Oct 9 Product Order Deadline

Oct 7-11 •Fall National Convention & Rose Show,

Atlanta, GA

Oct 22-24 SCD Fall Convention and Rose Show

Tulsa, OK

Oct 30 •HRS Fall Rose Show

Nov 6 ■Product Pick up

## **2011 Nominating Committee**

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 James Laperouse
 281-469-4056

 Maria Trevino
 713-861-5412

 Baxter Williams
 713-944-3437

At this time of year, the committee begins to look for candidates to fill our officer positions. We do not know what your expertise is. Won't

you talk to someone on the committee, if you might be willing to consider some position?

# Kroger Neighbor to Neighbor Program

Please take this barcode the next time that you go to Kroger and ask the cashier to scan it along with your Kroger card. We must re-enroll each year. We thank you for helping the Houston Rose Society, and hope that you will again connect your card to HRS. Only one organization can be linked to a card. Their program runs from May 1, 2010 to April 30, 2011.

More information can be found on our website www.houstonrose.org.

HOUSTON ROSE SOCIETY



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## KIDS' KORNER

by Gaye Hammond

Did you know that the water you drank this morning may have been some of the same water that has been around the Earth for millions of years? The earth is called the "water planet" because most of the planet is covered with water. That is good for us and our plants because we both need water to live.

Water falls from the sky as rain. When the water hits the ground a couple of different things can happen to it. It can run off and be channeled into rivers or streams; it can soak into the ground (where our plants' roots are) and where underground water caves (called aquifers) are; or it can be turned into water vapor. When water turns into vapor and stays in the air - that is called evaporation.

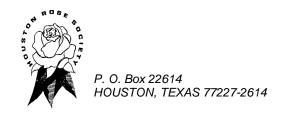
This month we are interested in the effect that water has on our plants. A plant's roots suck up water that is in the ground and moves it up the stem to the leaves and flowers. The leaves of a plant work like our lungs do. The plant's leaves can change the water into vapor and "sweat" it back into the air. This is called "transpiration" (trans-per-ā-shūn). Transpiration is pretty much an invisible process but just because you can't see the water does not mean that it is not being put into the air. During a growing season each leaf on a rose bush will transpire many times more water than its own weight.

If the soil gets too dry, the plant's ability to transpire drops because the roots can't suck enough water from the soil to keep the plant healthy. When this happens the plant can wilt or even die. This is why it is important to make sure your plants are getting the right amount of water (last month's Rose Quest).

Rose Quest: This month let's see how much the roses in your yard transpire by building a Transpiration Trap. For this Quest you will need a one gallon plastic bag, some string and a measuring spoon. Slip the bag over a stem of the rose bush that does not have a bloom and is only leaves. Tie the bag closed with the string. Watch out for those thorns! Leave the bag on the bush for 3 hours. After 3 hours, carefully remove the bag from the bush. There should be drops of water on the inside of the bag. Close the bag and allow the water to settle in the bottom of the bag. After the water has collected in the bottom of the bag, pour it into a measuring spoon and see how much water the plant "sweated" out.

Explain what you learned to your parents. They will be impressed!





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#### **Address Service Requested**



Boy, is it hot!

## **Mailed July 28, 2010**

HRS web address: <a href="http://www.houstonrose.org">http://www.houstonrose.org</a>

#### ▼ ▼ Editor - THE ROSE-ETTE ▼ ▼

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**THE HOUSTON ROSE SOCIETY** is a non-profit educational organization affiliated with The American Rose Society and dedicated to the cultivation of roses in the Houston area.

## MEMBERSHIP is \$15.00 per calendar year, Electronic only \$12.00

January thru December. Mail membership dues to:

Baxter Williams 2502 Leprechaun Lane Houston, TX 77017-7320 Phone 713-944-3437 bxtwms@att.net

NOTE:

Send address changes to this address. HRS mails bulk-rate and it is NOT forwarded.

## Call a Consulting Rosarian

These Rosarians welcome your rose questions.

Donald Burger / Maria Trevino Denise Cope Elisabeth Duhon  ◆ Mary Fulgham / Randy Keen William Groth	Heights SW N Bel SW	713-861-5412 713-771-4841 713-855-8447 713-668-4054 713-728-1854
Gaye Hammond	NE	281-458-6116
♦ Robin Hough	SE	281-482-8944
John Jons	SE	281-794-2998
Robin Kohler	W	713-935-0329
♦Earl / ♦ Deanna Krause	SE	281-487-3347
James Laperouse	NW	281-469-4056
Jeniver Lauran	S	713-433-2524
Doug Mitchell	S	281-992-9167
Shirley Morgan	W	713-463-6719
John Patterson	Bry/CS	979-690-9630
◆ Baxter / ◆ Patsy Williams	S	713-944-3437

Master Rosarians

Randall's Remarkable Card for HRS, # 5928