

## **Earth-Kind® News for June**

**On a recent trip to Granbury, I was privileged to tour the Hood County Earth-Kind® trial garden located within the Master Gardener demonstration garden in Granbury. The whole garden area is outstanding. It contains a large rainwater harvesting demonstration, a greenhouse and lovely raised beds where various perennials and herbs are growing. The rose beds are edged with limestone rocks and pathways. The attractive appearance of this whole area doesn't hint at the actual research taking place under the guidance of Master Gardeners Mary Lynn Martin and Kathy Lowe. Marty Vahlenkamp, Agri-Life Extension Agent for Hood County, is also actively involved in the project.**



**Dr. Steve George discusses the Hood County trial garden with project chairs, Mary Lynn Martin and Kathy Lowe.**

**Hood County is testing the following cultivars: Carefree Beauty, Dorcas, Malaguena, Winter Sunset and Penelope. Carefree Beauty is, of course, the control rose in all of the Texas and National Earth-Kind trials. Dorcas, a small shrub with pink and yellow blend blooms, is a Buck Rose. Malaguena, also developed by Dr. Griffith Buck, is a small pink blossomed shrub. Winter Sunset with its gorgeous pale yellow blossoms is a larger Buck shrub rose. Penelope is a mannerly climber. The roses were planted in beds amended with compost**

**during the fall of 2007. They were watered as needed through October of 2008. Since that time they have been watered only when the soil is dry. Hardwood mulch is maintained at three inches. They are never sprayed, pruned or deadheaded.**

**Now in their second growing season the roses are being evaluated the first Monday of each month by 3 teams of two Master Gardeners each using Dr. George's evaluation procedures and data collection forms. This data will be maintained and final evaluations submitted at the end of the third growing season in 2010.**



**Signage is important in these trial gardens as they are viewed by many gardeners interested in the project. The signage used in Granbury is easy to see and hard to destroy. They used a model shared by Odessa Master Gardeners. The cultivar names are stenciled on inexpensive concrete bricks from the local big box hardware store.**

**Earth-Kind® Rose Research gardens are an easy and exciting way for Master Gardeners to be involved in real research that makes a contribution to the beauty and long term gardening health of our state. If you want information about starting a research garden in your county please contact me for a packet of information.**

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