

William Radler, is the creator of the Knock Out® family of roses that revolutionized the rose-growing and gardening industries. He turned a hobby involving the cultivation and hybridization of roses – which began in the basement of his home in Greenfield, Wisconsin – into a successful business with the introduction of the Knock Out Rose in 2000.

The rose's self-pruning habits, generous blooms and disease-resistant qualities quickly became the industry standard. The Knock Out Rose is the most widely sold rose in the world, with more than 90 million and subsequent varieties sold at independent garden centers, big box stores and many online retailers throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia and Japan.

In addition, as a growing testament to the many years devoted to research and testing, Radler created the "Radler Rosarium" on his two-acre property, which showcases a wide variety of roses in beautifully landscaped settings, and works with the Greenfield Beautification Committee to provide scheduled public tours.

Radler was the director of Milwaukee County Parks, headquartered in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, for 26 years, while also serving 13 of those years as director of Boerner Botanical Gardens, part of the parks system and a popular destination in the area. Radler holds a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture from the University of Wisconsin in Madison and is the author of "Rose Growing Simplified," and co-author of "Rose Gardening."

The commercial success of the Knock Out Rose gave root to Radler's philanthropic efforts locally and regionally. In 2002, he formed Rose Innovations, LLC, which focuses on research, development, education, and philanthropy. He also created a donor-advised fund for the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, with royalties received from the sales of Knock Out Roses in support of the Friends of Boerner Botanical Gardens. Donations to other organizations include the American Rose Society and the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin. In addition, he designed the Radler Terrace at the Greenfield Community Center and created a landscape design for a community park and children's playground in his neighborhood.

He was nominated for the 2020 NGC Award of Excellence by the Wisconsin Garden Club Federation.