

Shenandoah Rose Ramblings



Shenandoah Rose Society

A Society of the Colonial District
Chartered by the American Rose Society

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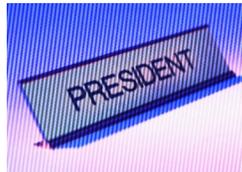


May Meeting

The May meeting of Shenandoah Rose Society will be held Thursday May 16, 7 P.M. at Christ Lutheran Church. The program will be a discussion on spray and feeding alternatives to chemicals.



From the President



We had a very light attendance at our last meeting. I can remember when I first joined Shenandoah Rose Society we had an attendance of 20 or 25. We are like many organizations where attendance and membership are dropping. Aging members, illness and other activities are taking their toll.

When I first joined we had refreshments at every meeting. Somewhere along the line that got dropped. That little social time after the meeting provided a good opportunity to get to know each other and discuss your roses one-on-one. We brought in outside speakers and still do occasionally. It costs a lot of money to bring in outside speakers and we have to be assured of good attendance. Funds are limited and so that limits outside speakers. It would be nice to have more.

I suppose I am looking for suggestions on how to make the Society better, improve attendance and inspire more interest. Your suggestions are welcome and will be considered. We are in a sort of Catch-22 situation. We need more members and attendance to have better activities and we need better activities to get more members and attendance.

We were well represented at the Pre-Spring meeting. Shenandoah was tied with another society for the highest attendance from a society. Of course, we hosted the meeting with the home court advantage. I thank the members of our Society for a good showing.

Please plan to attend our meetings, show your support and learn more about roses. Bring a friend, share a rose, your knowledge and bring your rose problems. We will learn together.

Charles R. Shaner



The Blue Cups

By Charles Shaner

It was back in 2011 I first saw an article on the use of blue plastic cups and STP oil treatment to combat thrips. I was asked by an editor in our newsletter exchange group if he could reprint that article. I could not find the Word version to send him so I thought it would be a good time to rewrite that article. I got the



Inside this issue:

From the President	1
The Blue Cup	1
Rambling Rosarian	2
Consulting Rosarian	3
Master Rosarians	3

Shenandoah Rose Ramblings

idea for this from another article I read in another newsletter. I tried it and it worked very well not only in controlling thrips but it also captures other insects.



People have experimented with different color cups and found the blue works best. After all, if you have ever used a bug zapper you will know the light is blue. The purpose is to attract the bugs to the light or in this case the blue cup. This is unlike the Japanese beetle traps where we always said the best place for them is in the neighbor's yard. The bugs are attracted to the blue cup and get stuck in the STP oil treatment on the cup.

The mechanics of this project are very simple and inexpensive. First of all you need to go to the grocery store and purchase a package of blue plastic cups. Next you need a method of hanging them upside-down in your garden. I used metal or fiberglass electric fence posts I got from Tractor Supply, which are round and about 4 feet long. I cut a hole in the bottom of the cup so it will slide down over the post. You will need a method to keep them from sliding down too far, so I used electric fence insulators which attach to the post, and placed one below the cup. The cup is mounted upside down on the post. I used another insulator on top of the cup to keep the wind from blowing it off.

Place a coating of the STP oil treatment on the outside of the cup. This stuff is about the consistency of honey. I use the Advance Auto brand which is the same thing but is a little less expensive. A sponge or a rag will work very well to apply the treatment to the cups. You will need to clean the cup off about once a week and re-coat it. This will also need to be done after a rain.

This will be my third season using the cups and I find them to work very well. For the people who want to get away from the chemical sprays, this is one answer. It is not 100% but it is a step toward protecting the environment and controlling insects at the same time. It is inexpensive and effective. I find one bottle of the oil treatment will last for several seasons. The post will last many seasons and the cups will need occasional replacement.



The Rambling Rosarian

By Charles Shaner



We are finally having some spring weather. That time of year when you run the heater in the morning and open the window in the afternoon. This is my favorite time of the year. All the trees and flowers blooming, the many colors they produce, and signs of new life all around you. A bird has built a nest outside my back door and is hatching five eggs.

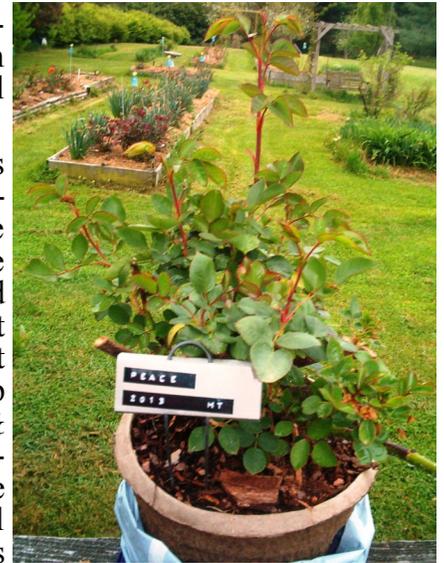
This is also the time when you do your rose pruning. If you haven't started it is time to do this chore. I finished my main rose beds earlier this year than ever before. The usual number of roses were lost to the winter (about 5) and I have purchased some new ones.

I found some good prices on older varieties at both Tractor Supply and Walmart. I had lost some "oldies but goodies" several years ago and was able to replace them at a very low price.

Shenandoah Rose Ramblings

This time of year also brings on the time to start spraying and feeding. I am already seeing a few aphids and those tent caterpillars are out in full force. I have sprayed my fruit trees and took care of them. They will migrate to your roses if left unattended.

Weed control is an important item on the spring agenda. It seems they grow all winter and really like to show off in the spring. The old-fashioned “grab on and pull” method works very well if you have the time and your back can stand it. If you use this method, make sure you get the root and not just break it off. Round-Up is an excellent herbicide for weed control in your roses but you must be careful. It is said Round-Up won't drift and requires direct contact. That may be true but the wind will drift it for you. I found a product at Lowe's that is the exact thing as Round-Up and at a fraction of the cost. It is sold under the name *Ultra Kill Weed & Grass Killer*. It has the same active ingredient as Round-Up but is a heavier concentrate. A quart of Round-Up concentrate makes 10 gallons while a quart of Ultra Kill makes 21 gallons. Comparing the two, the Ultra Kill cost about 1/4 that of Round-Up. I have used it and it kill weeds and grass the same as Round-Up in the same amount of time.



My roses are pruned and sprayed and weeds have been taken care of. Now I need to start my feeding program and let nature do the rest. If the weather holds out here in the Shenandoah Valley, we should be enjoying our first blooms around the first of June.



Master Rosarian

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This newsletter is published in a new format. I have used Publisher before in doing my newsletters but had difficulty with some of the things I wanted to do. I am back to trying it again. It seems to be coming a little easier to me this time. I hope you enjoy the issue.