

# Shenandoah Rose Ramblings

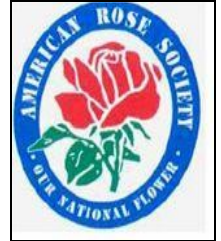


## *Shenandoah Rose Society*

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

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## **April Meeting**

The April meeting of Shenandoah Rose Society will be held Thursday, April 24, 6:30 p.m. at the home of Charles & Barbara Shaner, 93 Shaner Lane, Staunton. The program will be a pruning demonstration.



## **From the President**

I hope Mother Nature has finished with her temper tantrums. It has been a long, hard winter. My roses are showing much die back but I think they will survive.

We are into a new season for our roses and our Society. We will not have a long-time member with us this year as Genny Reid is selling her home and moving into Baldwin Park. We will miss Genny as a member.

Our numbers seem to be shrinking just a little from last year but working together we can bring that number back up. We need new members! There are many people out there who are growing roses and need help with them. We need to work on getting those people as members and teach them the way we were taught so they can grow better roses and teach others. Other societies are growing because they are out there looking for new members. We can grow if we work on the people we know who are growing roses and are not members. If you can get them to join, we can offer them a free four-month ARS membership as well.

We did not have a rose exhibition last year because I couldn't find a suitable place to have it. I think I have a good one in mind for this year so grow good roses so we can have a great exhibition this year.

You may want to make plans to attend the fall District show and meeting this year. It will be held in Richmond the first weekend of October at Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens. If you have an ARS membership, you get into the gardens free. Plan now to attend.

*Charles R. Shaner*



## **District Meeting**

We hosted the Colonial District Pre-Spring meeting March 14 and 15 here in Staunton. I cannot say it was one of our better meetings. I was very disappointed with the business meeting. The meeting ended and I didn't feel District business was conducted. We did have some good seminars and I think everyone enjoyed the food. We did come out with a small profit on the weekend.

As for the future, I don't think we will be hosting another meeting, especially in the near future, unless there are some serious changes made. Let's just say there are some people very unhappy and I am one of them.

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## Rambling Rosarian

By Charles Shaner

It is time to start our spring work with our roses. By the time you get this newsletter I will have started my pruning. I have taken a walk through and they have taken a beating over the winter. I am not sure if I have lost any but we will see.

You can and should start your spraying even if you don't have them pruned. This will get many of the insects and diseases before your roses really get started. Take a look at your sprays before you start especially if you held them over from last year. Sprays have a shelf life of 3 years but once the bottle has been opened that drops to 2 years. If your spray is getting old, you will need to replace it.

There has been much talk about the use of organics. It seems everywhere we go we see organically-grown products. I usually get a laugh at this: "That tomato is organic." I thought all tomatoes were organic. I would want to eat a plastic one. What is an organic product? Beginning on October 21, 2002, producers and handlers had to be certified by a USDA-accredited certifying agent to sell, label, or represent their products as "100 percent organic", "organic", or "made with organic (specified ingredients or food group(s))."

I am using a combination of organic and chemical sprays on my roses and vegetable garden. I will say it is more chemical than organic. As far as fertilizer I am using about 90% organic. The only chemical fertilizer I use is Miracle-Gro. I guess you could say my roses are about 40% organically grown which in most cases passes the criteria for organically grown.

Many of the vegetable growers have tried the liquid organic fertilizers and, as a result, you remember the cases of e-coli in lettuce and other vegetables? That is where it came from: the organic liquid fertilizer which got on the foliage and didn't have time to be cleaned off before it went to market.

Organics can be just as dangerous as chemicals if not used properly. This is why we should keep our tetanus shots up to date. I started doing this when I was on the fire department and have kept it up. The tetanus shot is good for ten years. I keep up with mine by remembering to get one in every year that ends in 5. One retired doctor said that in all of his career he only treated one case of tetanus and that come from the prick of a rose.

There has been a request from one person in the Colonial District to have a category in the District Show for Organically-Grown Roses. I am finding the interest in such a category limited considering we do not have a definition of an organically-grown rose. Until we have that definition I don't think such a category will exist. One mention has been for 10% organically grown. If you mulch your roses, and all of us do, then your roses are organically grown. It will take more than that. In order to qualify for "organically grown", you will need to use organic fertilizers and organic sprays. The organic fertilizer is easy to accomplish. I am at about 90% organic on the fertilizer. The sprays are the problem.

We have some good organic sprays on the market but they just don't do the job that you get from chemicals. Neem oil is a good one. In some extensive testing it seemed to work well until late in the growing season when its effectiveness reduced. I have used the blue cups coated with STP and that works very well, but they require constant maintenance to keep the cups clean and re-oiled. Milky spore works very well on Japanese beetles, but it takes about 3 years to reach full potency, lasting 10 to 15 years on one application.

The choice is yours in the quality of roses you want to grow. If you want exhibition-quality roses then you need chemical sprays. If you want roses just to enjoy and share with some friends, don't mind a few bug bites or a little blackspot, then the more organic route may be for you.

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## Church Memorial Roses

Donations for the roses to go in the center island of Christ Lutheran Church are coming along slowly. We now have enough to purchase 21 Red KnockOut roses. Donations are still being accepted. We have a tentative planting date of Saturday, April 26th. All are welcome to help. The ARS is going to pick up an article with pictures of before, the planting and after. Make plans to come out and help. We will be planting potted plants in 3 gallon pots. The plants are 18 inches tall.

I will be picking the roses up from Milmont Green Houses April 10th and taking care of them until planting time.



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