

Shenandoah Rose Ramblings



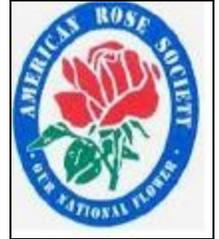
Shenandoah Rose Society

A Society of the Colonial District

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March Meeting

The March meeting of Shenandoah Rose Society will be held Sunday March 21, 2 P.M. at Christ Lutheran Church. The program will be "Ready for Spring". We will also have a report from the District meeting.



From the President

The winter has not been kind to us. The February meeting had to be cancelled because of weather. I don't think I can ever remember a March with a subzero temperature. Spring will come and I saw my first robin March 10. We will be able to get down to serious rose care.

Before you receive this newsletter I will be attending the District pre-spring meeting in Baltimore. Information I have received shows the registration may be down just a little from previous years. The weekend promises to be highly educational for both CRs and Judges. Something is offered for everyone.

I am already receiving requests for garden tours and other activities for the growing season. I would like to see our Society become more involved in these events. Promoting the rose is our prime objective and what better way than with endeavors involving contact with the public. This is where we get people interested in roses and build our membership. It is a matter of our survival. Many of the activities do not involve any physical work. It is just a matter of being there and talking with people. I am available on Saturday or Sunday but have to work during the week days.

I hope I will get some ideas in Baltimore for better programs at meetings and renew an interest among the members. I can remember the meetings when I first joined the Society. We had a large attendance with good educational programs. We usually had refreshments after the program with some social time. It would be nice to get back to that. I am open for ideas. Let me know what you want in the way of programs and I will see what we can do to present it. Outside speakers are great but they cost. We do have some funds in our treasury but attendance is needed to make it worthwhile.

I feel we are going to have a good season with beautiful roses. It will be a good time to share roses with others, talk about roses and increase our skills in growing roses. Show people that growing roses is not as difficult as they may think. Educate yourself so you can educate them in rose culture. Roses can gain you many friends. Share a rose.

Charles R. Shover

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Shenandoah Rose Ramblings

The Rambling Rosarian

By Charles Shaner

The long-awaited spring is finally here and that brings thoughts of gardening. With the weather we have had I don't believe I will get my potatoes planted by St. Patrick's Day. Unless the weather stays fairly warm from now on all spring planting and the season in general will be late. That doesn't mean we need to put plans off.

I have bare-root roses on order which should come in any time. I learned very early on in my rose growing to pot these and nurse them along for at least six weeks before putting them in the ground. It gives them a chance to develop a root system with some tender loving care. What taught me this lesson was I had bare-root roses ordered which came in March 15 and it was 19 degrees with snow flying. I had no choice but to pot them and it worked out very well.

As soon as there is a day you can get out and the wind is fairly calm, you need to give your roses a spraying with a good dormant spray with a fungicide. Lime sulfur has been an old standby for years. It not only gets the fungus but also many insects that wintered over in your roses. Those ugly black canes you see in the spring are caused by a fungus called canker. A late winter or very early spring spraying of lime sulfur and oil will help to combat canker.

Many people are over-anxious with the first warm days to start pruning. Hold off on this until after the first of April. Remember--pruning encourages growth and you don't want to do that too early. Pruning seems to be the hardest part of growing roses for many people when it's actually very simple. Spring pruning simply consists of taking out any dead or diseased wood and ending up with 3-to-5 good canes. I usually take the height down to around six-to-twelve inches. This will produce larger, healthier canes for a stronger bush. I lost a favorite bush last year because I had a long cane that looked in good health but I lost the bush because I should have taken it down further. The upper part of the cane developed a disease and very quickly went down to the crown. Don't be afraid to take the canes back as far and you need to. I have taken them all the way back to the crown and still developed a good strong bush.

Spraying should start early. Preventing insects and disease produces better results than trying to rid your garden of an infestation. I like to spray once a week which gets a jump on blackspot, powdery mildew and insects. Stores have already stocked the shelves and many have early spring sales. Take an inventory of your sprays and supplies and stock up early.

Feeding your roses depends on what and how you are feeding. If you are feeding organics you may start them anytime. Organics are slower release and last longer. I feed primarily organics which may even be applied in the winter months. It's an old trick I learned from my father who was an excellent farmer.

If you feed chemical feedings such as 10-10-10 then you need to wait until after mid-April to start your feeding. Chemical feedings kick in instantly and only last two weeks.

Mulch may need to be added after the winter months. My beds look in pretty good shape but I know by late spring I will need to apply a fresh layer. Mulch helps to control weeds and also holds in moisture. I use sawdust that comes out of horse stables. I not only mulch my roses but it gives them an organic feeding at the same time. I also mulch my vegetable garden with this sawdust and then plow it under in the fall. It really gives the garden a boost.

Shenandoah Rose Ramblings

The Rose By Charles Shaner

The rose has a long history of legend, myth and fact. It has played important parts in history for the Chinese, Greeks, Romans and many other cultures. It has been the theme of many songs, books and movies. In 1987 President Regan signed a bill making it our National Floral Emblem. Here are a few facts, myths and legends about the rose.

Fact--The rose is the state flower of Georgia, Iowa, New York, North Dakota and the District of Columbia.

Legend--In legend, the Prophet Mohammed was away fighting a war when he began to long for his wife, Aisha. Mohammed was tormented by the idea she was being unfaithful and asked Gabriel for help. Gabriel suggested Mohammed give his wife a simple test. When he returned home he should ask Aisha to drop whatever she was carrying into the water. If she was faithful, it would stay the same color and prove her unwavering love. Mohammed finally returned from his battle and Aisha rushed to greet him, carrying a huge bouquet of red roses. She was surprised when he commanded her to drop them into the river, but obeyed and the roses turned yellow. Eventually, Mohammed forgave his favorite wife but for some, the yellow rose remains a symbol of infidelity.

Fact--The rose is an ancient symbol of festivals and the commemoration of historic events. Every year on June 24, representatives of one of the oldest religious foundations in London offer the Lord Mayor a red rose on a cushion in payment of a tax originally owed by a certain Robert Knollys. He was ordered to pay this tax *ad vitam eternam* (for all eternity) in the fourteenth century for the crime of having created a passage between two houses that he owned on either side of Seething Lane, without counsel. At the other end of Europe, the Catalans celebrate Saint George's Day, April 23, by giving each other a rose and a book.

Legend--The rose is a legend in its own. The story goes that during the Roman Empire there was an incredibly beautiful maiden named Rhodanthe. Her beauty drew many zealous suitors who pursued her relentlessly. Exhausted by their pursuit, Rhodanthe was forced to take refuge from her suitors in the temple of her friend Diana. Unfortunately, Diana became jealous and when the suitors broke down her temple gates to get near their beloved Rhodanthe, she also became angry, turning Rhodanthe into a rose and her suitors into thorns.

Myth--According to Greek mythology, it was Aphrodite who gave the rose its name.



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