

Shenandoah Rose Ramblings



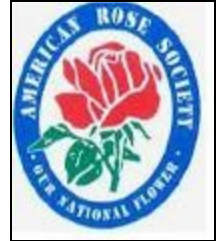
Shenandoah Rose Society

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 the Rose Days at Milmount Greenhouses in Stuarts Draft, VA on May 30, 2015. There will be seminars throughout the day on rose and flower care. Come out and help us promote the rose, greet the public and hopefully gain a few new members.



From the President

There are many things that can be said for a rose society. We work in our roses, talk with others when they admire our work, and our ego builds as we do better at our job. But with it all we remain rosarians who love to show off our work and share it with others. The ego is our pride in what we have done and what we show as the fruit of our labor. We bring a smile to others and say “you too can grow beautiful roses”.

We are just a small part of a larger organization. We are proud of what we do. We take time to show off our work. We invite others to join. We teach them how and hope they will teach others. We usually have a *Rose Exhibition* but that fell by the wayside last year with the lack of a good place to have it. I have an idea for that this year which may combine the efforts of two organizations that will benefit both. I need to work out some details before presenting the plan.

Memberships go in cycles. For years the membership of the American Rose Society has been on the decline. There is a ray of hope. In February it showed an ever so slight increase. It isn't much but it is pointing in the right direction. Our membership has recently gained two new members—John McConnell and Joy Vandervander. We welcome both to our group and will teach them to grow beautiful roses so they can share with others.

I will be traveling to Columbus, OH, in a couple of weeks for the ARS Board of Directors meeting. This is where I meet rosarians from all over the United States and even parts of the world. I always find some new technique to bring home from these meetings whether it be National or District. You can read all you want to on the Internet and in newsletters but there is nothing like talking with others face to face.

Our fall District meeting and show will be in Virginia Beach in October. I hope some from our Society will be able to attend. It is an experience with good friends, good food and beautiful roses. I hope some will make plans now to attend.

Charles L. Shover

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Shenandoah Rose Ramblings

The Rambling Rosarian

By Charles Shaner

One month ago my roses looked horrible. All those black canes and wondering if there was anything left alive. Way down next to the ground there was some green, a ray of hope. I started pruning about the first of April. The weather started warming up and new growth appeared. I started feeding my roses about two weeks later. I was wondering how many I would have to say “goodbye” to. The growth continued and I could count one more that would make it and then another and another. As it turned out I only lost five out of 150 bushes.

The ones lost were bushes that weren't very healthy going into the winter. Those were ones that came from discount stores and discounted as stress plants. This emphasized the importance of having healthy plants going into the winter. It also means paying a little more and having healthy plants to start with.

A vigorous feeding program is the key. As many of you know I brew my own rose food. It is a tea made from alfalfa meal and fish meal. They get a 12-ounce cup of this tea twice a week with a tablespoon per gallon of Miracle Gro added in. Twice a month I will add in a tablespoon per gallon of Epsom salts. I mulch my roses with the sawdust which comes from horse stables. During the winter months the ashes from my wood stove go on my rose beds. I also keep a watch on my pH and try to keep it between 6.0 and 6.5.



The sawdust used in horse stables is popular because it won't cause the horses' hooves to split. It is also low acid. Any organics applied as a mulch will produce a certain amount of acid as it decomposes. A watch on pH is important and an occasional application of lime is required. I usually mix a small amount of lime in with the sawdust as I apply it. This does a good job of keeping my pH in balance.



Water is another important element roses need. It would appear the amount of water roses need depends on the area where you live. For our area we have always taught an inch of rain per week. Exactly how much is an inch of rain? A gallon of water applied at the base of the plant is the equal to an inch of rain. I get newsletters for all around the nation and I have read amounts anywhere for 1 gallon per week to 13 gallons. **13 Gallons!** What are they trying to do? Roses in our area would die from root rot. Remember, roses like plenty of water but don't like wet feet. Good drainage is very important.

By the fifth of May I have canes 24 inches long and buds starting to show color. I am going to have an early bloom cycle. Usually in the Shenandoah Valley the first bloom cycle is around the first of June. I am going to be running seven to ten days earlier than that.

I ordered roses from Edmunds' Roses in Oregon which came in about the first of April. They were shipped by Fed Ex and for some reason Fed Ex gave them to the post office. By the time I got them I noticed the roots were a little dry. I potted them as I usually do with bare root roses and nursed them along. Of the six only three are growing. I contacted Edmunds' and they are replacing the three that didn't make it. I have several others that were rooted from cuttings. All together I will have at least 13 new roses to plant. That is if I don't purchase more locally, which I probably will.

I have always said growing roses should come with a warning label: “Caution—growing roses may be addictive”. It gets in your blood with every prick of the rose. I started out with 3 and am now at 150 and counting. Striving for that beautiful bloom that will dazzle your friends. It is your turn to show off, to help others grow better roses, to promote America's Floral Emblem. Try it, you just might like it.

Shenandoah Rose Ramblings

Feeding Your Roses

By Charles Shaner

There are probably as many feeding programs as there are rosarians. You have to see what others are doing and then develop a program that fits your needs. Do you want to compete in shows with hopes of getting a Queen of the Show? Maybe grow roses to supply the church or share with your friends? You may just want to grow a few roses to cut and bring in the house. Different desires require a feeding program to fit that need.

I like to show roses but I have never received a Queen. The competition is very stiff but I try with the few “rags” I take to a show. For this I have a very rigorous feeding program. The ones that have been in the Society for a long time know I brew my own rose food as a tea and feed them twice a week. They get a 12 oz cup of this with Miracle Gro mixed in twice a week. Twice a month Epsom salts is added to the tea. I mulch with the stuff from horse stables so this is also giving them a feeding. I purchase mainly exhibition quality roses and they get pampered.

You can grow beautiful roses with a very simple feeding program. This would be using mainly chemical fertilizers such as 10-10-10. Organics are very good. Mills Magic Rose Mix may be purchased from the Society and you can pick that up at Augusta Steel in Verona. Rose Tone is also good. I would suggest feeding them once a month.

If you want a little better-quality rose to share with the church dazzle your friends, you need to kick it up a notch. The chemical fertilizers are only good for two weeks. If you are using the chemical feeds then you need to feed them every two weeks. Miracle Gro is an excellent liquid feeding. With this you will want to give them a feeding of Epsom salts about three times during the growing season at the rate of one tablespoon per gallon of water and a gallon per plant poured around the base of the plant.

Roses are hungry and love to be fed. Feeding is not the only thing. You would eat and never take a drink of water. Roses need the water as well, but remember that roses do not like wet feet. Make sure you have good soil drainage. I had to go to raised beds to get the good drainage I needed. This spring we have had plenty of rain but a dry summer is coming. Roses in our area will do very well on an inch of rain per week. If we don't get that, then we must make it up. One gallon of water at the base of the plant is equal to about an inch of rain. If it is really hot and dry, you may want to do this twice a week. I like to use an open-ended garden hose and go from plant to plant applying 15 seconds of water per plant. From a garden hose this is approximately a gallon of water. It puts the water where you want it and none is wasted.

Good rose care brings beautiful blooms and great satisfaction.



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