



Shenandoah Rose Society Shenandoah Rose Ramblings

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

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Serving the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia and beyond

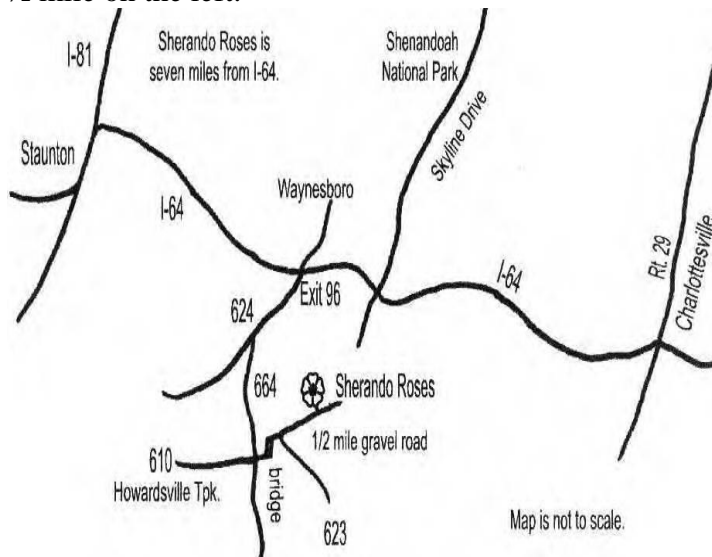


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May Meeting

The May meeting of the Shenandoah Rose Society will be held Sunday, May 18 at 2 p.m. at Sherando Roses in Sherando. Sherando Roses is going out of the retail business and we will be able to purchase roses that day at a good discount.

Directions: From I-64, take the Waynesboro exit at the foot of the mountain toward Lynhurst. Go seven miles to Sherando. Turn left on Rt. 623 in front of Sherando Grocery. Sherando Roses will be 1/2 mile on the left.



The Rambling Rosarian by Charles Shaner

It never ceases to amaze me how a bug can find a new piece of growth so quickly and where do they come from so early in the spring? Several people have already had an infestation of aphids. I know they come around early but at least let me get the spring pruning done before I have to spray!

They must check the website or the *Courier* for show schedules. They always show up right when it is time for a rose show.



Aphids are one of those pests that you go out in the morning and there are none. You go back in the evening and the bush is covered. How do you get so many so quickly? Infestations generally result from small numbers of winged aphids that fly to the plant and find it to be a suitable host. They deposit several wingless young on the most tender tissue before moving on to find a new plant. The immature aphids or nymphs that are left behind feed on plant sap and increase gradually in size. They mature in 7 to 10 days and then are ready to produce live young. Usually, all of them are females and each is capable of producing 40 to 60 offspring. The process is repeated several times, resulting in tremendous population explosions. Less than a dozen aphid "colonizers" can produce hundreds to thousands of aphids on a plant in a few weeks. Aphid numbers can build until conditions are so crowded, or the plant is so stressed, that winged forms are produced. These winged forms fly off in search of new hosts and the process is repeated. I once saw an article that said if aphids did not have predators, and we did nothing to control them, in a year's time they would cover the earth seven miles deep!

Sprays will control them but it seems they are getting harder and harder to kill. I am not sure what will work best on them at this point. At one

time I would tell people that they were easy to get rid of--anything would kill them. That does not seem to be true anymore. The recommendations are to first try a strong spray of water. If that does not work try insecticidal soap which works fairly well. Oil-based sprays such as Sun Spray Oil will help as will Neem Oil. The natural predator of the aphid is the ladybug. If you want to bring out the "big guns", Malathion mixed ½ strength does good. Be careful with Malathion--it will burn.



I just purchased ladybugs at Milmount Greenhouses and released them in my garden. I have only seen a few aphids this spring, just one here and there, but it has not been enough to spray for. I have had them really bad in the fall the last couple of years. I think the main reason is the about two years ago, I had Japanese beetles so bad that I used Sevin on them. It not only got rid of the beetles, it also killed my ladybugs.

Spraying is one thing that should be done with care and using caution. The majority of the sprays we use are chemical based. Somewhere along the line, they are harmful to humans and pets and should be used with extreme care. If you follow a few simple rules, chemical sprays can be used safely.

- Always mix sprays outdoors
- Read the label carefully
- Mix according to directions
- Use a sprayer that is in good condition
- Wear old clothing with long sleeves and long pants that can be washed
- Rubber, chemical-resistant gloves and a face mask are recommended
- Bring pets inside before spraying
- Never spray when it is windy
- Clean up your spray equipment. Rinse out the sprayer with water.
- Dispose of unused mixed sprays properly
- Put your clothing in the washer when finished and get in the shower.
- Store your sprays in a locked cabinet away from children and pets.
- Always use sprays for the purpose they were intended.

Some farm stores and Tractor Supply places have a solution to clean sprayers. I have one that I use on the sprayer I use for 2-4-D that I spray my

lawn with. It works very well. It is supposed to neutralize the chemicals and clean the sprayer. The sprayer I use this with has an electric pump. If I do not use this solution, the pump will freeze up after sitting for a period of time not being used. With this solution, I have not had a problem. It is also supposed to remove rust and dirt. You will have to ask at the counter for a sprayer cleaning solution.

Rosy Recommendation

By Charles Shaner

If you are looking for a good climbing rose, I have a good one for you. *Fourth of July* is a favorite of mine. It was introduced by Weeks Roses in 1999. I got mine off the auction table at the Colonial District Pre-Spring meeting in 1998. It was just marked "climber" because it was not yet on the market and the name had not been released.



Later that summer, I saw it in a catalog and the name was given as *Fourth of July*. I took a cutting to the District show that year to enter it. There was some controversy about whether it was eligible to be shown. Rules say the rose has to be on the market to be entered in the show. Someone had an Edmund's catalog there where it could be ordered. That was good enough to consider it as being on the market. I prepped my specimen and put it on the show table. It was awarded a red ribbon (second place).

Weeks lists it as an explosion of eye-popping color for the landscape. A fragrant climber that produces sprays of large long-lasting blossoms. This is the first climber to take the coveted AARS award in 23 years.

Fourth of July does not like to be moved. It will experience heavy die back when moved but will recover very well. It is also a favorite of the Japanese beetle. It will give a tremendous show in the spring and continue to bloom virtually nonstop until fall frost. It will produce large, heavy canes that will extend 12 to 14 feet. A tall trellis is a must!

I have enjoyed mine over the years. If you want a climber that will produce plenty of blooms and put on a good show, I highly recommend *Fourth of July*.

Soil Conditioning

by Charles Shaner

You study the CR manual, attend District meetings, go to the CR school, pass the test and you think you have got it right. That is when you learn something new. There are always new methods, new products to explore and some old methods become proven to not be just what everyone thought they were.

Soil conditioning is no exception. With so many different soil conditions in our area and state, it is a real challenge to get each one right for each one may require a different approach. In my own garden, I have red clay, shale and limestone.

I have always been taught that *gypsum* could be used to break up clay. We have a different type of clay east of the Mississippi then in the west. Gypsum will work to break up the clay found west of the Mississippi but will not work on the clay found east of the Mississippi. The best way to break up clay in Virginia is to add organics. Compost is great for breaking up clay. When you plant your rose, dig the hole as you normally would. I like to place the soil in my wheelbarrow and add organics and blend the two together. This will form a good mixture for your rose to grow in. You will have more soil you took from the hole so you will have a good amount of blended soil left over after planting. You may put this aside in pots or containers and save it for potting plants later. Remember that you need good drainage for your roses. If you have a heavy clay soil you may want to consider a raised rose bed.

Shale is another problem which may also cause you to consider a raised bed. If the shale isn't too tight, I will dig it out and replace it with good soil. A few small pieces of shale won't hurt anything.

Limestone is a much more difficult problem to work with. If the only place that you have for your roses is on a limestone ledge then your only choice is going to be a raised bed.

There are advantages to a raised bed.

- *Drainage*--Your roses like plenty of moisture but remember the old saying, "roses do not like wet feet". A raised bed will solve any drainage problems you may have.
- *Soil condition*--You will need to build up your bed with soil or fill it in depending on how high you raise it. This will require hauling in soil

and will provide a good opportunity to blend in organics as you build it up. An easy way would be to apply a layer of new soil and a layer of compost and blend it together with the tiller.

- *Ease of work*--It seems the older you get the further away the ground gets. A raised bed can shorten that distance depending on how high you raise it.

A raised bed is more work initially but can give a lot of good benefits in the long run.

Peat moss is another good soil amendment and may be used along with organic potting soil and compost. You can get too heavy a blend of peat moss and it will retain more water than you want. Do not use peat moss as a mulch.

When I plant my roses I always try to get a good blend of organics in the soil. This will lead to better growing conditions for your roses and will assist in breaking down the organic foods you give your roses. A good organic content in the soil will also attract earthworms which are very beneficial to the soil.

The SRS Store

Our inventory in the SRS Store keeps growing. We have several items available at a good price to our members.

Mills Magic Rose Mix--20 lb. bag--member price \$17, non-member \$20; Contact Raymond Shaner 540-248-2301

Messenger--Mix for 1 gallon--member price \$2, non-member \$3; Contact Charles Shaner 540-294-2875

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