



Shenandoah Rose Society

A Society of the Colonial District

Chartered by the American Rose Society

Volume 12, No. 6

July 2009

Serving the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia and beyond

On the web www.shenandoahrosesociety.org



From the President

We will not have a meeting in July. Normally we have a picnic in July but with the low attendance and not having a place to have it, the picnic has been cancelled.

The meetings for the rest of the year have been scheduled and are as follows:

August--Drying Roses and Flowers by Polly Holston at Polly's home.

September--Our annual Rose Exhibition. We have moved the location this year to Waynesboro Garden Center.

October--Winterizing Your Beds. The meeting will be held at Staunton Plant Company and given by Dave, the owner.

November--Normally we have our annual end of the year banquet. Last year we only had four people sign up for the banquet and it was cancelled. I hope we can do better this year.

I have asked several times for suggestions on meeting dates. Apparently, Sunday is no longer a good day. It is hard on the person giving the program if no one attends. There is much time which goes into preparing a program, and we try to make them educational and informative. We cannot afford to have guest speakers more than once or twice a year. This brings about a question that is on several of our minds--how much longer can the Shenandoah Rose Society survive with no attendance at meetings? What will we do for officers for another year? According to the bylaws, the president can only serve two consecutive terms. This is my second consecutive term so I must come out for a year unless the bylaws are changed. Who will take over?

I do not want to make this a newsletter of downbeat news but these are the facts. It takes more than 3 or 4 people to run and keep a society going. I do not want to see Shenandoah Rose Society go the way several other societies have gone. Your input and attendance is needed for Shenandoah Rose Society to survive.

Charles L. Shaner

President Shenandoah Rose Society

Feeding Your Soil

By Charles Shaner

We have talked many times about feeding your roses but not about feeding your soil.

I don't know how many are feeding chemical fertilizers or how many are using organics. There is a big difference in what happens to the soil between the two and the reaction in the soil.

As we all know, plants take their nutrients from the soil. Your soil needs to be fed so it can replenish its nutrients and continue feeding the plants. Chemicals do not feed the soil. Chemical fertilizers are in a state which is ready to use by the plants and do nothing to build up the soil. So why use them? They are easy to use, readily available and go to work instantly. Another downside is that chemical fertilizers add salt to the soil, which we do not want. Even water soluble products add salt to the soil and are only good for 2 weeks.

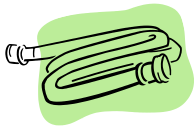
My mother had flower beds all around the house. I can remember her working the beds up in the spring to get them ready to plant and saying "This ground is as poor as Old Jobe's turkey". Now, I don't know who Old Jobe was or how poor his turkey was but that turkey must have been in bad shape. Mom would head to the barn and get dried manure to put on her rose beds or to find some rotten sawdust. She would apply this to her flower beds and work it in. She was feeding the soil.

By feeding the soil with organics, we are building up the soil. Organics add natural nutrients to the soil, and aerate the soil for better soil composition which aids in the breakdown of organics into components the plants can use.

There are many sources of organics. Mulching adds organic material to the soil as it decomposes. Manures are excellent for the soil but make sure they are dried or composted so they won't burn. Fish meal, alfalfa meal, bone meal, dried blood, and cottonseed meal are all excellent and are some of the components in Mills Magic. Another excellent one is mushroom compost. In this area you can get mushroom compost from

Milmount Greenhouses. They sell it in bulk for \$30 a yard. A yard will fill a small pickup truck.

Whether you use organics or chemicals, the pH of the soil is important. Roses need a pH of about 6.5. If you get above that, the soil will not release many of the needed nutrients. If you get much below 6.0 the soil again will not release many of the nutrients. If your pH goes above 6.8 you need to add sulfur or aluminum sulfate to bring the pH down. If your pH drops below 6.0 you need to add lime to bring it up.



No matter which way you go with your feeding, you need water. Water is the vehicle by which the nutrients are taken in by the roots to nourish the plant. It also takes moisture for the organics to break down.

When do you feed your soil? The answer is anytime. Organics can be applied summer or winter. If you apply them in the winter, they will be ready to go to work when spring comes and you can tell the difference in your plants. My father was not an educated man. He only went to the sixth grade but one thing he knew was farming. He raised chickens and would wait until the middle of the winter to clean out the chicken houses, and would spread the manure on top of about 2 inches of snow on the hay fields. He said as the snow melted, it would take the manure right on in the ground. There must have been something to it because he had some tremendous crops of hay, especially in the spring.

One question that is always asked--can I feed chemical and organics? The answer from the experts is, it is not recommended. If you are going to feed organics then use nothing but organics.

I have pulled away from chemical fertilizers and gone to organics. I went out in the middle of the winter and put wood ashes from my wood stove on my rose beds. My roses look better and this is the first winter in the some 20 years I have been growing roses that I did not lose a rose.

Organics last longer in the soil and build the soil up so it won't be as poor as Old Jobe's turkey. Healthy soil gives health plants. Feed your soil and give a drink of water when needed. You will see big results in your roses and other plants.



The Rambling Rosarian

By Charles Shaner



It is Japanese beetle time again. Several people have reported seeing a few but so far I have not seen a single beetle. What has been reported has been light.

I predicted a smaller crop of beetles this year due to weather conditions. The weather heavily affects the beetle. Last year, we had a dry, hot summer and some colder temperatures during the winter. I don't mean the winter was colder than normal, it's just that we had some cold spells where the ground could freeze down a couple of inches.

With a hot, dry summer the ground gets hard and the beetle cannot get very deep in the ground to lay eggs. You add a winter where the ground can freeze down a couple of inches and the beetle grubs freeze and die.

Two years ago, I put down milky spore. It took about five years of as they say, "beating me over the head with a 2x4" to get me to do it. Milky spore is well worth the money. The first year it was down, I had fewer beetles than in the past. It takes three years for it to reach its full potential. It sounds expensive but considering it lasts for 10 years, it is very inexpensive. How much would you spend on insecticides over 10 years to kill the beetles?

Blackspot has been a problem with all the rain we have had this spring. Blackspot is a fungus which comes up from the ground and is spread by splashing water. We have had plenty of splashing water with all the rain. I have heard it said water has to lie on the leaves for seven hours for blackspot to form. We have had that and then some.

There are things you can do to prevent blackspot. Take the leaves off your bushes up 6 inches from the ground. Keep leaves and trash cleaned up in your beds. Regular spraying will help to prevent blackspot from forming.

If your beds are like mine, the weeds are plentiful this year. Weather conditions have been perfect for them to grow. I have dug, I have pulled and, finally, I brought out the Roundup® when they got ahead of me. I have always been told Roundup® needed direct contact and would not drift. This year I have received several reports of it drifting. I wonder if it really is or was it just careless spraying. Be careful when you use it up close to your plants.

Cooking With Roses

Rose Ice Cream

by Lynn A. Pettis

This ice cream variation is based on the famous “rose ice cream” served at Raffles in Singapore!

Ingredients

1 quart of vanilla ice cream
1 Tablespoon of pesticide-free, dried, ground up red and pink rose petals
3 Tablespoons coarsely chopped pistachios
1 Tablespoon of rose syrup
1 Tablespoon of rosewater
2 teaspoons of ground cardamom

Directions

Soften ice cream in a large bowl. Stir in the remaining ingredients until well mixed. Spoon into serving glasses (champagne flutes are nice!).

Re-freeze until set.

Colonial District Fall Meeting & Show

By Charles Shaner

The Colonial District Fall Meeting and Show, *A Kaleidoscope of Roses*, will be held in Richmond, Virginia, hosted by the Richmond Rose Society at the Holiday Inn I-64 West End Crossroads the weekend of September 25-27, 2009. The rose show will be held at Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens. A registration form is enclosed. Full registration is \$85 per person.

I know the economy has been rough on all of us but the Richmond Rose Society needs our support. At present, I do not plan to attend for financial reasons. To pay the registration and motel bill would cost me \$500 to go and I just don't have it. At the same time, Shenandoah Rose Society needs to be represented. I hope some of our members can attend.

Master Rosarian

Charles Shaner, Staunton 540-294-2875

SRS Consulting Rosarians

Meredith Yeago, Waynesboro 540-943-7874

Polly Holston, Staunton 540-886-8551

Raymond Shipley, Lavale, MD 301-729-8271

Al Minutolo, Crozet 434-823-1092

John Huddle, Waynesboro 540-943-2229

CR Emeritus

Robert (Bob) Holsinger, Staunton 540-886-8783

