

Shenandoah Rose Ramblings



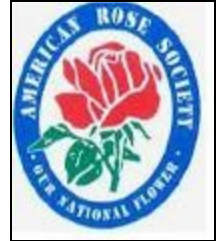
Shenandoah Rose Society

A Society of the Colonial District

Chartered by the American Rose Society

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Monthly Meeting

We will not have a monthly meeting in August.

A reminder of the District meeting and show in Virginia Beach. Anyone needing a registration form please let me know. October 9, 10 and 11.



From the President

I sit here trying to think of what to say about Shenandoah Rose Society. I have been a member since the early 90's and think about the changes, not only to Shenandoah Rose Society but to the Colonial District as well. When I first joined we had 30 to 40 people at a monthly meeting. There was a good educational meeting and sometimes outside speakers which drew an even larger attendance. The district meeting were the same way with attendances reaching 125 and higher. The ARS had a membership of over 18000. Now we are lucky if we have 6 at a Shenandoah meeting, 50 at a District meeting and the ARS membership is down to just over 7000. Where have all the people gone?

Many societies in the District have fallen—Thomas Jefferson in Charlottesville, Fredericksburg, Roanoke just to name a few. There are more struggling for existence and Shenandoah is among them. Societies have folded that had a larger membership and attendance the Shenandoah but I guess I am just to stubborn to say it is time to call it quits. The question is “How long can we hold on with a dwindling membership and attendance?”

Shenandoah has had a good history. It has had some very prominent members not only in the District but also nationally and now the home of the District Director. It has hosted numerous Pre-Spring District meetings and in the past provided good representation at District meetings with attendance.

Shenandoah along with the District and the ARS has lost many members with memberships not being renewed and the one we have no control over—death. Where are the ones to carry on? What is in the future? Will an organized rose program dwindle away and die?

This may sound grim but that is the facts. What is our future and where do we go from here. Whether societies live or die is in our hands. The future is in our hands. We can determine what happens.

Just a thought. Do we really need a meeting every month. It is difficult putting a program together every month with just a couple of people in attendance. I suggest meetings in February, April, July picnic and a meeting in September. Think about it.

Charles L. Shover

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Shenandoah Rose Ramblings

The Rambling Rosarian

By Charles Shaner

The summer seems to be flying by. Didn't I just do my spring pruning last week? I haven't had to water because I have had ample rainfall. Weekly sprayings have kept down black spot and most insects except Japanese Beetles. The beetles have been heavier this year than in many years past. Thanks to my experiment with the moth balls I have not had a deer problem.

My feeding program continues with the tea brew and give them which they dearly love. I have noticed that when I siphon off a five gallon bucket I will get some settlement of solids in the bottom of the bucket. I have been adding in one tablespoon per gallon of Merical Gro and twice a month one table spoon per gallon of Epsom salts. I was lucky enough to come across a 20 gallon stainless steel mixing tank with a drain valve. It also has an electric motor with a mixer. It blends the tea so well I no longer have a settlement problem.

I have the best looking rose bushes I believe I have ever had. They have heavy foliage, large tall canes and nice blooms. I have a few bushes that are alive but I believe the winter has done it damage. Varieties that should have suffered from the winter are doing very well such as St. Patrick and Marilyn Monroe. Seems to make you re-think about "winter tender".



The biggest obstacle this year has been weeds. The growing season has been good for the roses and weeds are enjoying it even more. I have been spraying with Ultra Kill which is a generic Round Up around the edges of the beds every three weeks. In the beds it has been hand pulling but just can't seem to keep up. The patent went off Round Up a couple of years ago so there are generic versions on the market. The Ultra Kill can be found at Lowe's at a lower price and it is exactly the same chemical. It is a little heavier concentrate so check the mixing instructions. By not mixing it as heavy makes it go further and even less expensive. I get the same kill results as with Round Up.

I have always heard the theory about Japanese beetles that the infestation could be predicted by the weather conditions for the past year. Apparently this is not true. The theory has been a hot dry summer combined with a cold winter will produce a smaller crop of beetles. The thought has been with the dry summer the ground is too hard for the beetle to get very deep in the ground to lay their eggs. That combined with a cold winter will freeze the grubs producing a smaller population. That was the conditions we had last summer and over



the winter which didn't prove true. I have a larger infestation of beetles than I have had in many years. The beetles should be gone in a couple of weeks but for now I am just letting them have their way. I spray once a week and it will knock them down for a day or two but then they are back. I put down the Milky Spore several years ago and it helped but it seems to have worn off. I guess it is time to reapply.



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Plan Ahead

By Charles Shaner

At one time I wrote in an article about roses going dormant. Someone somewhere in sent me an e-mail saying roses do not go dormant. Apparently this person never grew rose where the winter produces cold weather with snow and ice. Roses do go dormant with all the symptoms of other dormant trees and plants.

Getting roses thru the cold winter months requires some work and care during the growing season. The healthier you have the roses going into the winter months the better chance they have of surviving. This is done with a good feeding and watering program along with regular spraying. I use mainly organic feedings and you can feed organics anytime—even in the winter months. I learned this from my father who was an excellent farmer. He would feed his hay fields with manures during the winter months which produced heavy crops during the growing season. Organics take longer to kick in but last much longer.



Regular sprayings with a spray that has disease and fungal control is highly recommended. I always put two 325 mg aspirin to a gallon of spray. The aspirin helps to enhance the natural immunity of the plants. Aspirin will not dissolve immediately in water so I have a bottle with a cap I will put the aspirin in and let it sit for a week. It still leaves small particles which will stop up a sprayer nozzle. I will strain it thru a coffee filter before putting it in the sprayer. I set the bottle back up with water and aspirin after each spraying so it will be ready for the next week.

Another trick I experimented with and find it works well is to add an ounce of a horticultural oil to a gallon of spray. The oil helps to keep down black spot and powdery mildew and also acts as a spreader sticker. It also seems to give the sprays a little more kick.

Do not use treated water with you sprays. This also applies if you have a water softener. Treated water causes the chemical action of sprays to bread down and not to be as effective. You are better off to go down to the creek and dip out the water for spraying. A Bayer representative told me this years ago. I tried it and he was right. I noticed the sprays gave much better results.

In my early years of rose growing we would feed the roses with triple phosphate in late September or early October. The theory was the triple phosphate would harden the canes for winter. I have not done this for years and did not see any difference when I stopped doing it.

Get your roses as healthy as you possibly can during the growing season. It is their health insurance for the winter months.



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