

Shenandoah Rose Ramblings



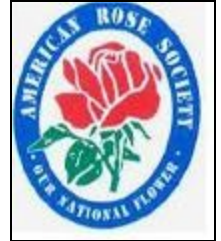
Shenandoah Rose Society

A Society of the Colonial District

Chartered by the American Rose Society

Volume 17, No. 9

October 2015



Monthly Meeting

The October meeting of Shenandoah Rose Society will be held Sunday, October 25, 2 P.M. at Christ Lutheran Church. The program will be "Growing Beautiful Roses"



From the President

By the time you receive this newsletter I will have attended the District fall meeting and show in Virginia Beach. I thought this was going to be a very low attended meeting but I was surprised to find a very well attended weekend. As of Friday, October 2, they only had a registration of 40. This attendance figure, along with the health of many societies, is putting the fate of District meetings in jeopardy. At present we do not have anyone to take either the spring or fall meeting for 2016. I am holding a Society President's meeting in Virginia Beach to see if we can find a resolution to this problem.



If you did not attend the society meeting last month you missed seeing some of the most beautiful roses I have ever grown. I had just returned from the show in Martinsville the day before and, as usual, had the most beautiful blooms I have ever seen. Now that is saying a lot considering in Martinsville I received the Queen and King of the show: the Queen being



Country Girl hybrid tea (pictured left) and the King *Elizabeth Taylor* hybrid tea (pictured right). In addition I also got most fragrant with Barbra *Streisand* hybrid tea. My first Queen and first King in the same show.

Inside this issue:

- From the President 1
- Rambling Rosarian 2
- Mother Nature 3
- Master Rosarians 3
- Consulting Rosarians 3

This show was also a learning experience for me. Keep track of when and where you purchase a rose and also the name that was on it when you purchased it. Keep a log book with that information. In the future if a question comes up as to that rose being what you called it, you have something to backup the name you have on it. I had placed what I thought was a *Snuffy* on the table only to find out it wasn't a *Snuffy* but a *Marilyn Wellan*. It is still unexplained how this happened since the bush was purchased and labeled as a *Snuffy*, and I have never purchased a *Marilyn Wellan*.

I have another such rose in my garden. I don't remember what I had purchased but when I got it home I noticed a nursery tag on it saying it was a *Howard and Sara*. A good rose, but not what I purchased.

Keep track of your roses and make sure what you have is what you purchase.

Charles L. Shover

Shenandoah Rose Ramblings

The Rambling Rosarian By Charles Shaner

How do you grow roses? That is a question asked by many wanting to plant a few bushes for their own pleasure, and that even includes many Consulting Rosarians. Variations in weather conditions bring on a variety of growing techniques. One must be prepared to “shift gears” in the middle of the growing season to deal with changing conditions.

I would not consider the summer we have had in the Colonial District as a hot one. There had been plenty of rain up until around the end of August, when it turned dry with no rain for over a month. Then the rains came. I registered 4.5 inches in one day! Then it turned cool and cloudy. Then more rain--temperature drops. Spraying is needed but can't spray because it is raining. A show coming up for the weekend but no blooms because of all the rain. The show is cancelled. The next weekend is the District show and it is still raining. This is Saturday and the rain should stop after Monday with the District being the coming Saturday. I might be able to spray on Tuesday and temperatures are supposed to back into the 70s, but will it be enough to produce blooms for the show?

As you can see, rose growing is very dependent on the weather. We can take control of many conditions such as dry weather with watering and insect and disease control with spraying, but nature has to cooperate to make those work. Extreme hot or cold weather is something we cannot do much about.

We do have control over soil conditions with fertilizers (both chemical and organic), soil pH, soil moisture, and insect and disease control. These four items are very important for us to take care of. Regular feedings are required by roses. They have a great hunger. I actually feed my roses twice a week. I brew my organic tea from alfalfa meal and fish meal and give each plant 12 ounces of this combined with 1 tablespoon of Miracle-Gro at each feeding. In the dry weather (if we hadn't received an inch of rain during the week), I would water every other day. I use an open-ended garden hose with 15 seconds of water at the base of each plant. Spraying is done once a week and I like to spray in the evening about the time the sun goes down. The temperature is dropping and it takes the spray a little longer to dry. Seems like it has a little more kick. Many insects are more active at night so it spoils their picnic.

This brings us to soil conditions. The proper soil is very important. I have all the conditions roses don't like--red clay, shale, and limestone. My soil doesn't drain well. The answer is raised beds which is what I have done. I raised the beds up 10 inches and filled it with good top soil. This gives me the drainage I need for roses. pH still needs to be watched. I mulch my roses with the poplar sawdust that comes out of horse stables. As I work with the sawdust I mix in lime. This keeps my pH in balance where I want it. Any organic that is applied will produce acid as it breaks down and we have to keep that in balance.

It seems the more I grow roses, the more I am around rose people, and the more I learn. Is there anyone who know it all about growing roses? I have met and heard of some who think they do but there is always something new they can learn. It never ends.

Dues Time

It is time to renew your dues for 2016. Dues are still \$12.00 for the year. Use the attached form to renew your dues. They may be paid at the meeting or mailed to Meredith Yeago at the address on the form. Please consider renewing and bring a friend along with you.

Shenandoah Rose Ramblings

Mother Nature

By Charles Shaner

Just when you think you are in control of your roses Mother Nature turns the tables. The first 2/3 of the growing season in the Shenandoah Valley were wonderful, averaging an inch of rain per week. Temperatures in the 80s during the days and 60s at night. Then came the end of August and September with temperatures in the 90s with 70s at night and no rain for five weeks. And now, according to my rain gauge, I am showing over 10 inches of rain in 12 days and it is still raining. One rose show has been cancelled and I don't know how it will play on the District show for the coming weekend.

How do you cope when you are averaging almost an inch of rain per day, the temperatures have dropped and you have shows coming up? I don't have the answer. I can't get out to work with my roses because it is raining. I can't cut blooms for a show because the rain has ruined them and there is now way to protect them for these downpours and winds. The best I can do is fire up the wood stove, get a cup of coffee, and relax.

I wonder what the winter months will bring? I am hearing all kinds of predictions with many calling for an extremely bitter winter. Cold and wet are what most are saying. Is this going to happen? It is just an educated guess as no one can predict Mother Nature. I keep saying it, "We should all quit our jobs and become a weatherman. We would make a whole lot more money and we don't have to be right".

These rainy days are a good time to think about what you want to do with your roses next year. The rose catalogs will soon be coming in and you can pick out what new varieties you want for spring. You can make plans for where you want to put that new rose bed in the spring. You can think about the rose you presently have and which ones you would like to shovel prune. I have two I know are going to come out. Some of my raised beds need repair work on the frame. One new bed I started this year will need to be expanded in the spring. I have many cuttings set for rooting and I will need a place for them in the spring. Then there will be the District meetings. I never come home without roses.

We have no control over Mother Nature and we need to learn to work with the elements. Even with all the education there are some things that are just beyond our control. Heavy rains, too much rain, hurricanes, and extreme temperatures are something we just do not have much control over.



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