

# Shenandoah Rose Ramblings



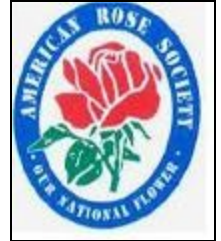
## *Shenandoah Rose Society*

A Society of the Colonial District

Chartered by the American Rose Society

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### **Dues Time**

Last call for is dues for the 2018 season. Dues are still \$12.00 which includes member and spouse. We also have a youth membership for \$10.00. If dues are not renewed by March 31 your membership will expire.

### **March Seminar**

The March seminar will be held Sunday, March 18, 2:30 at the home of Charles and Barbara Shaner, 93 Shaner Lane Staunton. Pruning seminar

### **From the President**

Sorry we missed the February newsletter but I was busy putting the Colonial District Pre-Spring meeting together. There are priorities that take place at times.

We are starting our new growing season and the harsh winter weather seems to be behind us. We will start having our regular monthly seminars in March. These seminars are an excellent way to expand your knowledge and learn to grow better roses.

The Pre-Spring District meeting was a huge success. I was hoping more from Shenandoah Rose Society would have attended. The largest attendance was from Richmond Rose Society with 10 members present. There were excellent seminars with a wealth of information. I received comments of this being the best one yet.

Membership numbers is something that is always on our mind. Without membership we do not exist. It seems societies all across the nation, with few exceptions in large metropolitan areas, are suffering from a decline in membership. If you look at the population in those metropolitan areas and the membership numbers in their societies, they are actually in the same shape as all the other societies if you figure member shop per chapatti.

This seems to be turning around in some areas as with the ARS. The reason it is turning around take a lot of work and commitment. You have to keep the membership issue in front of people constantly before it will get their attention. It is just like advertising. You see an ad for a product so many time you finally want to try it. That is what has to be done with membership.

At Milmount last year, I handed out numerous membership applications and did not get a single one back. We learn as we go and what I learned here you not only hand them the form but also a pen to fill it out. Oh, and be sure you get the money for the membership.

Getting new members increases the society roster but only if you can retain existing members. Some join and get a little information and then they are gone. You need to stay around for "The Rest Of The Story". After 30 plus years I still do not have all of the story. I continue to learn. New products, new techniques are continually coming out. The labeling has changed on that spray you have been using for the past five years. A way of keeping up is retaining your membership. If you have not renewed, please do so today.

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*Charles R. Shaner*

## Shenandoah Rose Ramblings

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### That Darn Groundhog!

by Charles Shaner



Well., he did it again! That over stuffed, spoiled rotten, over grown rat called a groundhog predicted six more weeks of winter weather. Or did he?

The groundhog's track record is not very good. He only hits it twenty percent of the time. Actually if you count from February 2nd until the first day of Spring it is exactly six weeks. A person who is from that area in Pennsylvania told me that it is just an excuse for men to dress up in tuxedos and get drunk.

The winter was rough and my roses are showing their battle scars. I know I have lost several but I won't know how many for a few weeks. They are looking terrible but at the same time I am seeing new growth coming on most. I do not use winter protection because of the high winds I have. Early on in my rose growing I tried the winter protection and discovered the wind liked to rearrange it and even carry it off.

It appears we may have an early spring but don't count on it. If we can make it until the end of March we should be safe. If you ordered in roses and they come in bare root before the first of April I would suggest potting them. This will give you until the first of June to get them in the ground. I did this years ago when I got roses in on the 15th of March and it was 19 degrees and snow flying. If you do pot them, leave them in the pots for about six weeks before putting them in the ground.

I ordered roses from Edmunds back in the fall and they came in the end of February. They are potted and in my greenhouse. These are the best looking plants I have gotten from Edmunds for several years. They are all showing signs of putting out new growth. These will be planted in the rose beds sometime in late April or early May. This will give them time to develop sufficient root structure and have a better start.

If you are wanting to move rose bushes, from the first of April until the first is June is the prime time. It is impossible to get all of the root structure when you dig them up and this will give them time to develop a good root structure before winter weather.

Beware of the up and down temperatures this time of year. We have had a few days in the upper 60's and even into the 70's but it is the cold night temperatures which can cause damage. It is generally said plants are safe as long as the night temperatures do not drop below 28 degrees for more than two hours. This depends on the plants themselves and where they are planted. Many bedding plants and vegetables cannot withstand that temperature drop. Do not plant anything outside that is susceptible to freezing until after the 15th of May. Rose bushes are a little more hardy than many give them credit for. The new growth on a rose can freeze and the only damage done is they will be set back a few weeks for the bloom cycle.

I watch the temperatures very closely both outside and in my greenhouse. I have a heater in the greenhouse on a dusk to dawn switch. The sun provides the heat during the day but the heater is needed at night. Even on a cloudy day the daylight provides enough heat in the greenhouse that I do not need a heater.

That groundhog is good entertainment but not a good weather predictor. How can he see his shadow on a cloudy day and how can he not see his shadow on a sunny day? Watch a reliable weather service and act accordingly. Even with that I have always said "We all need to quit our jobs and become a weatherman. You would make a lot more money and you don't have to be right".

**Mills Magic Rose Mix, fertilizer, is available from Shenandoah Rose Society. You may pick it up from Raymond Shaner at Augusta Steel in Verona. Cost is \$18.25 for members, 20.00 for non member**

# Shenandoah Rose Ramblings

## Spring Into Your Garden

by Charles Shaner

Spring! Ready or not here I come. It is a time of awakening. Nature wakes up or trees, grass and plants. Many of my trees are already showing signs of leaves developing. My roses are starting to put on new growth. I want to start pruning but I know the first part of March is too early for the Shenandoah Valley. We could still have cold temperatures and snow.

I normally tell people in this area not to prune until after April first. Pruning encourages new growth and that is not what you want this early. Nature is forcing new growth out at present but that may or may not last. If we have a hard freeze, and that could happen, the new growth you see will freeze. New will redevelop when the temperatures warm up again.

Spraying starts when new growth is at sufficient length and the new foliage has turned green. Some say not to spray until you see a problem with you roses. I recommend different. I am in favor of preventative spraying. As the old saying goes "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure". It is much easier to prevent an infestation of insects or fungi than it is to get rid of them once that have established on the rose. A good example, black spot can be prevented but once on the plant cannot be cured. Always us your sprays according to the instructions on the bottle. Each time you purchase a new bottle, always check the instructions. They do change over time.

Feeding is another item some get to eager with early. It depends on what you are feeding your roses. Hold off on chemical feeds until mid April. Chemical fertilizers go to work immediately and only last for two weeks. You do not want to push your roses to early. Organic fertilizers are different. They will not start working until the ground warms up and they last for six weeks. I like the organics to feed my roses but in the warmer weather I will mix in a few chemical, water soluble, fertilizers.

Our March meeting will be Sunday, March 18, 2:30 at the home of Charles and Barbara Shaner, 93 Shaner Lane, Staunton. This will be a spring pruning demonstration. You will see how to prune roses with a variety of winter damage and different classes of roses. Plan to join us.



### Master Rosarians

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