

The Rose Letter

Garden State Rose Club

An Affiliate of the American Rose Society

Our Christmas Number

December 11, 2010

201-664-2044

This meeting is our annual Christmas Party, and as always it WILL START PROMPTLY at 12 NOON

For the party buffet, will everyone please call Tony DeAngelis to arrange with him what you would like to bring so as not to have duplications? Some of you always bring a specialty to which we look forward, and others surprise us

(But please do not surprise Tony) with their offerings whether a main course or salad or a dessert. It need not be any thing elaborate or expensive as this is just a rose-family get together.

Remember it is potluck Please note that we have always held this meeting earlier in the month and earlier than the regular meeting hour to allow us more time.

A much anticipated part of our Christmas get together is our unusual gift exchange.

This is an anonymous gifting that is both merciless and hilarious. The idea is not to bring a fancy gift but one intended to be unexpected or funny. No gift should be over \$10. It could be a rose or garden related item or a bottle of cheer or even last years gift given back. (It is possible for a gift to have an endless life.) These gifts are placed on a table without labels and everyone takes a number from a hat to determine the sequence in which we can randomly choose a package. We then open the one we pick and set it down in front of us.

Now it gets interesting, the next person who picks can, before they open their package, chose to exchange it with one already opened. It quickly becomes almost nonstop kibitzing and razzing as gifts keep moving back and forth and the larger the number chosen from the hat the later you get to pick and the more already opened gifts from which to trade. There is no need to participate and it is actually just as much fun watching as taking part since the gift is just the excuse for the game which I found out one year when I was so busy with the preparation and setting up that I left my gift at home. This was when we held our meetings too far away to return home by the time I found out what happened!

The Child that was ere worlds began(...We need but walk a little way,

We need but see a latch undone...)

The Child that played with moon and sun

Is playing with a little hay.

Hark! Laughter like a lion wakes

To roar to the resounding plain,

And the whole heaven shouts and shakes,

For God Himself is born to reign

And we are little children walking

Through the snow and rain. G. K. Chesterton

December, 2010

AUTOMATIC RENEWALS

The new membership page of our website has been available for just over a month now and online orders are increasing.

You can also renew your local society affiliation dues through this page, so if it's time to renew yours, please take a moment now to renew them quickly and securely online.

TRIAL MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

The trial membership program is a great tool for your local society to gain new members - and has been very successful - thanks to the commitment from all of you who make it so.

There are 3 different parts of the trial membership program - the value of which is \$86! 1.) A new member to your local rose society gets the four-month trial membership FREE. Simply email their name, address, phone number, and email address to me, and they will be entered to receive their FREE membership. 2.) An existing member of your local society who does NOT already belong to the ARS can take part in the four-month trial membership for just \$5. This is to offset the cost incurred by ARS. You or the member can *mail in the \$5 to ARS Headquarters, along with the member information. *Please write the name of your society on the form or check. 3.) A member of the general public can purchase

the 4-month trial membership for \$10. This can be ordered online through our website, or they can mail in a check, or they can call ARS Headquarters' to purchase this over the phone.

This \$5 four-month trial membership offer will make a great stocking stuffer this holiday season!

LOOKING FORWARD

We have not yet received the rates for the liability insurance for 2011. As soon as we receive this information we will forward to each local society treasurer and president.

NATIONAL EVENTS CALENDAR

ARS Spring National Convention: June 2nd - 6th, 2011 in Winston-Salem, NC. Hosted by the Winston-Salem Rose Society. ARS National Miniature Conference and Rose Show: June 24th - 26th, 2011 in Syracuse, NY. Hosted by the Syracuse Rose Society. ARS National Fall Convention October 12th - 16th, 2011 in Los Angeles, CA. Hosted by the Los Angeles Tinseltown Rose Society.

Stay up-to-date with all events of interest to rosarians, and submit your event to be listed on the ARS calendar. As always, if you have any questions or comments, please let me know. Wishing you all a wonderful Holiday Season.

Yours truly,

Laura Pfender

Director of Membership 318-938-5402 ext 108 laura@ars-hq.org

A. R. S. ARTICLES OF INTEREST

1) Where Are Our Members?

By Charles Shaner

Over the past few years, our attendance at meetings has been dropping; not only at our local society meetings, but also at the District meetings. Society memberships have been dropping to the point some societies cannot continue and are disbanding. For some, what was once a large, thriving society has now joined the ranks of a small, struggling society. This trend is not unique to your local society; it is nationwide.

The ARS is faced with the problem and so on down the line. I know of one society which once had 125 members but no longer exists because of a drop in membership and attendance. Where is the problem?

There are several factors which have contributed to the situation

1. The economy. We are all feeling the pinch. Many are unemployed, and if you are over 50 the chances of finding a job are almost none. The ones who have employment or are living on retirement income are afraid to spend. They will put food on the table before they put food on their roses. Food and shelter for themselves takes priority over roses.

2. Aging membership. The average of our membership is getting older. Many of our members just are not able to travel eight hours or even four or five hours to a district meeting. We are not attracting new members. The younger generation is more interested in a video game or surfing the Internet than growing a rose. They are not accustomed to doing chores around the house like many of us had to do on the farm as I grew up.

3. Death. Yes, that is right—death. For those of you who have attended the district meetings regularly, think for a minute of the number of members who attended the meetings regularly and are no longer with us. If you have been able to maintain a level membership in your society, you are lucky. It goes back to the fact we are not recruiting new members.

I do not believe there is a definite answer to the problem, but it is going to take the efforts of all of us to survive this situation. We need to make our meetings more central so members do not have great distances to travel. At our district meetings we must make efforts to cut costs and make them more affordable. We can do this by using our own people for speakers instead of bringing in outsiders who travel great distances. There is great talent and knowledge in the District and we need to tap it. We need to look for lower-cost motel accommodations and possibly use facilities of a little lower standard than we would like.

Many just didn't have the money to spare and, for some, age was a factor in not wanting to travel.

With the ability, knowledge and resources we have in the District we can make these changes and survive, but it will take some work on our part. And we must do our best to attract new members.

1) The Rise and Fall of our National Floral Emblem.

by Tom Carruth, research director and award-winning rose hybridizer for Weeks Roses and Chris Greenwood, the former vice-president of Armstrong Garden Centers.

Roses have been a garden mainstay across the United States and especially in the Sunbelt where the temperate climate allows them to flourish. Once considered the most popular flower, the rose has seen her popularity, over the last 20 years, fall precipitously. Homes that once were home to large rose gardens have disappeared – to be replaced by lawns or other landscape material. Industry figures for field-grown roses also reflect this horrific decline. One industry leader estimated the total numbers of field-grown roses as:

1990 – 50,000,000 --- 1995 – 45,000,000

2000 – 45,000,000 --- 2005 – 40,000,000

2010 – 25,000,000 --- 2011 – 18,000,000

Also – over the last several years, many smaller rose companies have closed their doors. Nor'East is probably the most notable plus the big three – J&P, Star and Weeks are struggling to survive in a horrible economy, plus potted landscape roses like “Flower Carpet” have taken away from the classic budded rose market. We thought finding a nearly perfect clean rose like “Knock Out” would enhance the market. Instead it has served to kill interest in any other type of rose.

Combine the above information with the same rapid decline in the rolls of the American Rose Society and there is a staggering parallel. Also, consider this; in the 1950's the Pacific Rose Society boasted a membership of 2000 and today, membership hovers around 100

Demographics

Moving through the social strata of the US are various groups that demographers characterize as: The Baby Boomers, The X Generation and the Y Generation. The “Baby Boomers” are now starting to retire – they probably have the most disposable income of all. Homes are generally paid for, and now they have the time to do all the things that they weren't able to during the child-raising and career-building years. Boomers are very garden-wise and while it's still an important part of their lives, it is starting to take the back seat to traveling and other leisure-time activities.

The X Generation, popularly called GenX, is the next generation after the Boomers. They are highly educated and tend to want everything –NOW! They are self-absorbed with their careers and getting the kids through school and college. The GenX'ers treat gardening as a necessary nuisance and only like quick garden projects that can be completed quickly with a minimum amount of effort. They prefer to hire a “mow and blow” gardener rather than doing it themselves. Being a two income earner family, they have as much, if not more, disposable income as the Baby Boomers.

The Y Generation or the Millennial Generation follows GenX and are the most technology-savvy yet. They are very comfortable with video games, iPods, computers and other techno-gadgets. They spend the majority of their free time immersed in a world of technology. Gardening is definitely not on their radar.

Negative Perceptions

Unfortunately, roses do have a negative perception. People love roses. But their very next comment is always “They are so difficult to grow”. The average person feels that roses are very time-consuming plants. The thought of constant attention to pruning, feeding, spraying and watering leaves them overwhelmed. We all know that this does not have to be) the case. Roses are among the easiest plants to grow, requiring a minimum amount of care – unless you're an exhibitor. Remember – there are roses growing in and around abandoned homesteads and cemeteries that only God waters – and many have

survived for decades. So – where does this misconception come from and why is it perpetuated? From the answers of well-intentioned Rosarians, rose societies, garden columnists and companies that offer rose-care related products.

(This is basically what I had been saying in the news paper advertisements I published when we had programs with which to attract new members.)

Here are some examples:

1. Bayer Advanced produced a commercial that ran for two seasons touting the rose as a temperamental prima donna that required TLC. They were constantly thirsty, required regular feeding and, of course, needed their rose care products to control diseases and insects. In their zeal to sell more rose care products, they did just the opposite, by turning people off roses.
2. Rose society newsletters and web sites with complex, detailed and text book-like information on fertilization, insect control, disease control, soil preparation, pruning, watering, etc., etc. Such information is useful to the ardent rose exhibitor, but to the novice – it's enough to scare the daylights out of them.
3. Gardening columns in newspapers featuring year-round rose maintenance calendars. Which also leaves the perception that roses are a time-hog and impossible for the average person to successfully cultivate.
4. One of the worst offenses is profit-starving companies willing to dump excess inventory in bargain discount chains. Really – selling a 99¢ bare root roses in June? In hot climates? How many will survive? This really cheapens the value of the rose and makes our National Floral Emblem nothing more than a commodity. Imagine a young couple in their first home – both are working – raising kids - and we really think that they would even attempt to grow a rose based on the complexity of the available information? We think not!

Where Do We Go From Here?

It is incumbent on all rose lovers across the country to spread the word on the ease of cultivating our national floral emblem. Stay positive – avoid the negative! But in the end, with the decline in American Rose Society membership, we have limited voices and resources. There are some voices of wisdom in the rose industry, but most have fallen on deaf ears. A few of the suggestions have been:

1. Establish a National Rose Marketing Council. An organization to be made up of rose growers that would have the financial ability to promote the rose and squash the perceived negative image of rose growing.
2. All American Rose Selections (AARS) had been increasing their presence in magazines and news papers, yet the days of extensive, lengthy articles touting the new arrivals seem to be long gone. An effort to increase public awareness in all media, not just consumer publications, is paramount.

A First Step

1. As rosarians, we need to emphasize the ease of rose horticulture and the rich reward of beauty.
2. When asked – offer easy solutions to rose care questions.
3. Publish simple, easy-to-understand articles on rose culture. Complicated articles are a turn-off to time-starved novices.

From July, 2010 Colonial Courier, Albert N Williams, Ed.

[From American Rose Rambler, March/April 2010, Peter Schneider Ed.]

All of the above from the December ARS news letter, Louise Coleman, Editor – roseylou@aol.com

(The hybridizers must also bear much of the blame because many of the roses they have produced require excessive care, which in some cases have also helped put themselves out of business as well!)

The following two pieces have become traditional inclusions in our Christmas number:

A Christmas dinner blessing

ALL: Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Light of the World, bless, this table and this home with your peace.

ALL: Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Word made flesh, bless this meal and this gathering with your wisdom and grace.

ALL: Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Son of God bless those here gathered and bless all your children..

ALL: Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Bread of Life, bless the hungry and those who thirst, help us bless them with our generosity.

ALL: Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Bless all who celebrate your birth, Lord Jesus;

Bring us to heaven to be with you, the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God

forever and ever, Amen.

TAKE JOY!

I salute you!

There is nothing I can give you which you have not; but there is much, that, while I cannot give, you can take.

No heaven can come to us unless our hearts find rest in it today.

Take Heaven.

No peace lies in the future, which is not hidden in this present instant.

Take peace.

The gloom of the world is but a shadow; behind it, yet, within our reach, is joy.

Take Joy.

And so, at this Christmas time I greet you with the prayer, that for you, now and forever, the day breaks and the shadows flee away.

Fra Giovanni

GARDEN STATE ROSE CLUB

2011 DUES NOTICE

Mr. Mrs. Miss _____ \$7.50/year _____

(First)

(Last) _____

(Street Address)

(City)

(State)

(Zip)

Phone Number

(E-Mail Address) Each additional Family member

Mr.

Mrs. _____ \$5.00/year _____

Miss.

(First)

(Last)

Total Enclosed _____

Please complete form and Make check payable to GARDEN STATE ROSE CLUB and mail to:

Susan Gempler, Treasurer

113 Feronia Way

Rutherford, N.J. 07070