Southeast

Presented by the Potomac Rose Society

A Rose Society Focused on the Future

by Joe Covey

In the fall of 1931, a group of rose enthusiasts gathered in Chevy Chase, MD to discuss the formation of a rose society in the Washington, D.C. area. An organizing committee was formed, and in December 1931 the first official meeting of the Potomac Rose Society (PRS) was held. The Society grew rapidly, sponsoring public lectures, garden tours and annual rose shows.

Nearly 85 years later, PRS continues to serve rose lovers in Suburban Maryland, Northern Virginia and the District of Columbia. Our region has many different microclimates due to varying proximities to bodies of water, the heat-island effect of urban areas, and the fact that our society's geographical area has a long north-south axis. Summers are normally hot and humid, but our growing season is quite long. Blackspot is probably our major challenge, but midge, Japanese beetles, spider mites and thrips are issues in some years.

To serve the interest of our members, PRS sponsors lectures and demonstrations, provides consulting rosarians, co-publishes a newsletter, sells or auctions roses, tours rose gardens and organizes rose exhibitions. As PRS aspires to continue its leadership and service, it has been listening to rose lovers. Over the last decade, potential members have been telling us they want beautiful, fragrant, environmentally sustainable, low maintenance roses! PRS has responded to their requests by diversifying recent programming to make more information available on growing modern and old garden roses in the mid-Atlantic region without the use of synthetic chemicals. As ARS President Pat

Shanley has said, "Disease resistant and sustainable gardens are part of the future of rose growing." Our first major educational effort towards organic culture was a highly successful symposium, "Disease Resistant Roses and Organic Garden Practices." The featured speaker was Peter Kukielski, author of *Roses Without Chemicals* and former curator of the New York Botanical Garden's Peggy Rockefeller Rose Garden. Encouraged by the excellent attendance and enthusiasm, the PRS plans to make the symposium a yearly event. The second symposium is scheduled for June 3, 2017, and will feature Gaye Hammond, past President of the Houston Rose Society.

Rose Tunnel by Inez Jackson

A Suburban Oasis: The Gardens of Inez Jackson

by Inez Jackson

For 36 years I have never piled a leaf at the street for county pickup and use compost, manures and teas to tame the clay on our near one acre, zone 7 property. So why would I want roses which require chemical sprays, fingernail polish for wounds and countless hours of work? A friend, knowing my biases, delivered a boat-load of roses and promised I would not have to spray them. Soon, a tunnel of climbers was added to seek the sun in the more shady spaces and, yes!! I too, was hooked. After shying away

from hybrid teas and beautiful show roses that require spraying, I discovered that in Germany, synthetic chemicals required for beautiful roses were banned about 20 years ago and as a result, hybridizers such as Kordes, Tantau and many other European hybridizers were producing beautiful roses focused on disease resistance. In no formal way, I wanted to test some of these roses in my suburban Maryland garden for the Mid-Atlantic region. My favorites among the roses that have fared well are: 'Wedding Bells', 'Poseidon', 'Beverly', 'Sunny Sky', 'Dark Desire', 'Savannah', 'Summer Romance' and 'Fire Opal.' I am desperately seeking a source for the Piano Series from Tantau (hint, hint).

Five Tips on Growing Roses Without Synthetic Chemicals

by Carol Edwards

When I began growing roses in my Washington D.C. garden, I decided not to use synthetic chemicals to battle diseases and pests. I have learned a few things over 16 years that I will share with you here. 1) I research and select roses that are disease and pest resistant in my area. I "shovel prune" underperformers. In Washington, several public gardens do not use synthetic chemicals on roses, including the U.S. Botanic Garden, the Smithsonian Institution and the U.S. National Arboretum. I visit these "no-spray" gardens several times a year with camera and notebook in hand. I research promising roses on the internet, consulting multiple sources and favoring those without industry connections; e.g. research institutions and non-profit gardening groups. I check out rose introductions from countries with strict pesticide laws, such as Germany. 2) I build soil quality. I work to know what's in my soil, and how to amend it effectively with organic material. 3) I frequently clean up leaf litter, water low to the ground, and examine leaves and stems to forestall problems. 4) I share what I learn. 5) I have ATTITUDE! I'm curious, observant, open to experimentation, ruthless and patient.

'Scarborough Fair' by Carol Edwards

'Roseraie du Chatelet': a Blooming Machine In The Heat

by Lisa Mundy

Every now and then, if you're lucky, you come across a rose that surpasses your expectations. 'Roseraie du Chatelet' is one of those roses. Named after a famous rose garden in eastern France, near the border with Germany and Switzerland, this little known gem is a floribunda introduced by Bernard Sauvegot in 2000. It is an award-winner in Europe, having taken home a Silver Medal at Baden-Baden in 1999. However, it is still a rarity in American gardens. What a pity. I took a chance on this rose a couple of seasons ago, buying it as a bare-root from Palatine. This year she has rewarded me greatly, producing gorgeous blooms and pristine foliage during the blistering 100+ degree heat of summer in my no-spray garden. She did all of this with only a handful of *Rosetone* at the beginning of the season, no mulch, and no supplemental water. Her companions were self-sown Nigella 'Love-in-a-Mist' seedlings. Their feathery foliage is visible in the photo below of her first bloom in the spring of 2016. The lady has been producing her mildly fragrant blooms continuously since April. What more could a rose lover ask for?

'Roseraie du Chatelet' by Lisa Mundy