



Page One: The News:

- The Houston meeting of the ARS Board of Directors focused on such matters as membership incentives, marketing of conventions, and increasing revenues through the Patron Program and other sources (see **Page Three: Patron Program**)
- The solution to the telephone problems at Headquarters mentioned in the previous issue of the ARS & You did not happen; instead, Peggy Spivey will continue to answer phones in the mornings and Shirley Evans will maintain the service in the afternoons. Both will try to solve any customer issues 'on the spot,' so to speak.
- Laura Pfender is the new Membership/Marketing Director. She can be reached via membership@ars-hq.org.
- In her report to the Board, Pat Shanley suggested that local rose societies might want to adopt the new 2-year membership category so as to improve cash flow, better enable long range planning, and save expenses on reminders and calls.
- The Board of Directors in Houston approved a revision of the shipping rates (See immediately below).
- There is an attachment to this e-mail. If you cannot access it, go to the White Book, p. 133 for a facsimile. Or download it from the ARS web site: www.ars.org

Page Two: Views: Jolene Adams is in her second term as District Director of North California Hawaii Nevada District. She also serves on or as chair of a half dozen committees in the American Rose Society. And she writes.

RESULTS FOR A SQUEAKY WHEEL

By Jolene Adams

For several years I have been receiving e-mail from viewers of the ARS web site, complaining about the shipping charges incurred when ordering merchandise from the ARS. Complaints sent to the ARS web site are relayed to ARS headquarters, so they can contact the individual and correct the problem, if possible. One thing that never got 'fixed,' however, was the shipping charges issue.

Early in 2006 I noticed that the shipping charges went up significantly. Ordering rose show supplies became more expensive, and when I tried to order the *2006 Approved Exhibition Names*, I found I would be paying \$13.00 for the booklet (with member's discount) plus \$8:00 for shipping!

My first thought was to just ask someone in Northwest Louisiana to go to the ARS store, buy the booklet for me, and then mail it to me. First class postage would be cheaper. But then I decided that all ARS members were affected. I made a big fuss at the ARS Spring Board Meeting in Seattle—and was promptly deputized to form an ad hoc committee to investigate ARS Show Supplies, National Certificates, and Shipping Charges and to return with recommendations for the Fall Board Meeting.

I decided to ask several other rosarians to help attack the problem. While the committee members agreed that the shipping and handling costs were 'too much' in most cases, we had no basis for comparison. We began researching the shipping charges of other non-profit sites on the Internet, and downloaded the rates from the U.S. Post Office, UPS, and FEDEX. We also 'went back in time,' in the ARS Web Site archives and found the ARS shipping/Handling charges since 2000 for tags, ribbons, and shop supplies (the other part of the report to the Board).

ARS had updated the shipping costs at least twice. That was fair, costs change and most often they increase. In comparison the cost of mailing a typical rose show supplies order to me in Hayward, CA, I found that the ARS would charge me \$19.00 shipping for an order totaling between \$80.00 and \$124.99, regardless of weight. For my society that would be Horticultural tags, Arrangement tags, Challenge tags and the ARS certificates and rosettes.

I weighed 60 certificates which totaled 1 lb. For 5 lbs, you could get all of your tags, ribbons, rosettes and certificates in one box, shipped for \$10.95 and picked up at the site by UPS or FEDEX. The USPS rate for priority mail enveloped was \$4.20 and a flat rate box was \$8.00 anywhere in the United States with no weight limit.

There will always be a problem with calculating shipping. Any company in business today must decide if they charge by weight or by cost of goods. And somehow, the salary of the person filling the order must be covered, either as overhead, or as a percentage of the time it takes to fill the order.

The ad hoc committee recommended to the Board of Directors that the shipping rates be adjusted downward for 2007. The committee also recommended that the ARS investigate using the USPS standard boxes at flat rates instead of making our own boxes from whatever cardboard we had on hand.

The Board of Directors agreed to have the shipping charges revised for 2007, and order an investigation into using outside resources (like the USPS or FEDEX) for shipping supplies instead of using 'make it yourself' boxes at ARS headquarters.

The new rates will go into effect as soon as the Board meets in Houston to approve them. (Watch for the announcement on the web site.)

Under the new rates, my purchase of the *Approved Exhibition Names* booklet would still be \$13.00, but the shipping cost would only be \$3.50. Now that I can live with!!!

Page Three Re-Views: The ARS Patron Program:

The ARS Patron Program was established in 1974 to provide funds for the Gardens of the American Rose Center under the leadership of Howard Walters. Recently, local society presidents and other officers received a letter from Marilyn Wellan, Immediate Past President of the ARS and current Chair of the Patron Program; in that letter Mrs. Wellan asked that ALL local societies and leaders become Patrons of the ARS.

Patron funds support three areas of the American Rose Society budget. Patrons choose which areas will be supported by their contributions.

- The Gardens of the American Rose Center: The largest national park dedicated to the rose is a natural destination for school and tour groups. The funds help to develop and maintain the ARS Headquarters and gardens.
- Educational Programs: The ARS produces all kinds of publications to further the knowledge and enjoyment of the rose.
- “Wherever Needed:” The funds support the program most in need of the money.

Income from ARS membership dues currently provides less 40% of the ARS annual budget. Patron program funds have supported basic services in the past and are expected to do so for the foreseeable future.

Marilyn Wellan’s letter in December noted...”Last year 47 local societies were contributing Patron Societies, at levels from \$100 to \$500. If your Society was in that group, we appreciate your support and hope your Society will renew its Patron Status in 2007. We would like to see the number of participating societies grow; and we hope that you, as a local society leader, will encourage your society to join the patron Program in 2007.”

More recently, she added, on behalf of the Patron Committee: “We also hope that you will set an example as a Local Rose Society leader by personally participating in the ARS Patron Program. All Patrons will be listed in a special Patron edition of the *American Rose* in March; donors will receive the distinctive Patron pin which can be proudly worn to indicate your Patron status. Patron Societies will receive both the pin and a certificate designating them as contributing members of the ARS family.”

For more information on this program, see p. 132 of the White Book.

To respond to items in this ARS & You, please write to any committee member of the Local Society Relations Committee:

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