

# The Speakers

**Melissa Schiff** is the Vice President and leads the publicity committee for the Albuquerque Rose Society. She has been growing roses for 10+ years in Albuquerque and has recently become interested in rose photography. Before retiring, Melissa worked as a physician and public health researcher. Since retirement, she has been studying Art History on her own through the Khan Academy, attending online lectures through the Smithsonian Associates program and visiting art museums on her travels. Her talk on Roses in Art was inspired by her interest in applying her new art history knowledge to her favorite flower - Roses.



**Physiological and Genetic Disorders of Roses** – rose health is more than managing for diseases and insect pests. In this seminar we explore how roses react to stresses (nutritional, water, etc.) and study various genetic disorders that rosarians could encounter with their roses.

**Mark Windham** was a Distinguished Professor of Ornamental Plant Pathology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. For the last 14 years of his career, Mark worked toward developing management plans for Rose Rosette Disease (RRD). Upon retirement, Mark was appointed as Professor Emeritus by the UT Institute of Agriculture. He serves as an advisor for American Rose Garden Selections (AGRS). Mark is a member of the American Rose Society (ARS) and a recipient of the ARS Klima Award. Currently, Mark writes a monthly column call “Mark’s Mayhems and Maladies” for ARS society newsletters. Mark and his wife Karen were made permanent honorary members of the Connecticut Rose Society in 2023. In 2024, Mark was honored by the University of Tennessee as a UT Gardens Horticulture Legacy. In 2025, he was made an honorary member of the Winston Salem Rose Society.



**Just don't Call IT DIRT!** Most of us do call it Dirt! It is in fact a living organism that supports life! This presentation will look at the components, textures, structure, color, fertility of our garden soil, and outline some practices that develop a great soil for rose gardens.

**Sonja Lallemand's** love of plants began at a very young age in her mother's rose garden. Observations made in that garden developed a love of nature and appreciation for roses as well as the flora of her native island of Haiti. With degrees in Botany (B.S.), Horticulture (B.S.) and Fruit Science (M.S.), it took 20 years to put her knowledge of the plant world into real practice. With the help of the Rose Society of the Ozarks, generous donations from members, a rose garden built in the 30s at Phelps Grove Park, Springfield, MO, was rescued and Sonja learned a great deal about roses in the process. She served the group as editor of the newsletter *Rose Review*, and president; she is currently a member of the Belleville Area Rose Society. Sonja retired in 2015 from the University of Illinois Extension where she enjoyed sharing her knowledge of the plant world and guiding others in improving their surroundings.



## Growing & Caring for all Types of Roses -

**Ron Daniels**, author of *Rose Therapy: My journey of Growing and Caring for Roses*, is a Master Consulting Rosarian with the American Rose Society. Ron is a member of the Nashville Rose Society where he served as president.

Ron has enjoyed growing roses for more than 30 years and maintains about 150 rose plants in his personal garden in Hendersonville, TN. These roses include Hybrid Teas, Grandifloras, Shrubs Roses, Miniatures, Climbers, David Austin, Old Garden and English roses with other companion plants. Ron is also a Consulting rosarian for Belmont University's Adelecia Acklen Garden at Cheekwood, as well as for other public and private gardens.



Ron opens his personal garden up to public garden tours in the Spring and Fall, annually. The garden provides him with much pleasure, but also provides for an ongoing flower ministry at his church, Long Hollow Church in Hendersonville, TN.

Ron's personal Mission Statement: "to grow roses and to share with others along with teaching beginners rose growing basics; to apply myself to continue learning about growing roses and remain teachable. I am continually committed to mentor and encourage others on how to care and share roses."

## Growing Roses in Pots

**Jason Capote** is a lifelong rosarian based in New York City whose passion for roses began at the age of nine. Today, he grows more than 170 rose bushes representing nearly every class of roses, combining decades of hands-on experience with deep horticultural knowledge.

An ARS CR & horticulture judge, Jason is well known on the show circuit. His entries are regularly featured on the head table at rose shows and have earned numerous Queen of Show awards. He serves as president of the Long Island Rose Society, and is a former editor of The Fragrant Rose. He is also actively involved in the New York, Penn-Jersey, and Yankee Districts.



Jason previously served as curator of the Village Green Rose Garden at Great Neck House in Great Neck, Long Island. In recognition of his expertise and service to the rose community, he was honored as

Outstanding Consulting Rosarian at the 2024 ARS National Convention in Rhode Island. That same year he was also awarded the ARS Bronze Medal from the Long Island Rose Society and the ARS Silver Honor Medal from the Penn-Jersey District.