FRIDAY OCTOBER 16
7:30

Busch Community Room

Photo Contest

Highlights of the National Show

On Storing Tubers/clumps
Hi Folks,

Hard to believe but our current dahlia season is coming to a close. Hopefully your tubers were able to survive the dramatic changes in weather this summer to provide you and others with beautiful and numerous blooms to appreciate and share.

To all who participated in our 3 shows this year, thanks so much for making them all successful. Congratulations to all who won awards and more importantly thanks to all who helped set up and tear down the shows. Another job well done by our show chairman Dave Cap and his supporting cast.

A special “congrats” to Tony Evangelista for winning the “Grand Champion” award at the National Show along with the best seedling and best miniature. Well done Tony and thanks for being a great representative for DSO.

Regarding the business end of DSO, it looks as though we’ll have openings for the offices of President and 1st Vice President for the upcoming year. Anyone interested in filling these positions please let me or any other officer know of your interest. I need to provide a slate of officers for 2016-17 at our November meeting so please give it some thought. It’s a great group of folks to work with.

We’ll have the photo contest at our October meeting. Categories for the contest are defined in this issue of the Digest so pull out those photos from this year and enter the contest. We had great participation last year and are looking for the same now Be a participant.

That’s it for now, see you at our meeting on the 16th.

Mike
OFFICERS and CHAIRS

Mike Weber, President…………………………... 440-647-3162
Jerry Moreno, Past President………………….. 440-543-5658
Emily Halderman, 1st Vice President……………330-697-7368
Jim Thompson, 2nd Vice President……………….216-926-7419
Sharon Swaney, Treasurer and Membership…..330-562-3296
Sarah Thompson, Recording Secretary………...216-926-7419
MaryAnn Moreno, Corresponding Secretary…..440-543-5658
Dave Cap, Show Chair…………………………...440-888-5589
Barbara Hosta, Archives and Librarian……….. 216-524-2635
Jerry Moreno Digest Editor………………………440-543-5658
Barbara Hosta, Cleveland Botanical Rep…………216-524-2635
Nancy Riopelle, Sunshine Chair…………………..330-483-3360
Tony Evangelista, ADS Representative………….440-867-3711
Sharon Swaney, Webmaster………………………330-562-3296

REFRESHMENTS

MaryAnn Moreno, Sharon Swaney,
Sarah Thompson

MEETING DATES for 2015

March 20  New Introductions; Waking up tubers
April 17   Tuber auction
May 15     Plant auction
June 19    Ron Miner and Tony Evangelista...on virus
           Don Dramstad...on preserving cut flowers
August 22  Picnic at Brant and Carol’s
October 16 Photo contest, speaker pending
November 20 Speaker pending
December 5 Holiday get-together...Wembley Club
Help! - Baron Dahlias Stock

I have aggressively followed my own advice on getting rid of plants in my garden that appeared to have virus and have consequently thrown out a lot of my own introductions. If you have any extra stock of any of my introductions, I would appreciate having some back for next year. **Wendy Miner, Barbara’s Favorite, Baron Todd, Baron Chad, Baron Katie, Princess Paige, Earl Miner, Jeff Miner** are all in short supply. I do have one or two healthy looking plants for most of those except Paige, Wendy and Katie! They are gone from my garden and I would sure like to get some healthy stock going again. Thanks!

Ron

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Show Results

Courts of Honor are on our website for the:
- Cuyahoga Show
- Geauga Show
- DSO Show in September
- Show at Petitti’s Oakwood

Congratulations to all who won and super thanks to all who entered to help fulfill our mission of promoting the dahlia to the public.
The American Dahlia Society

Looking for a neat Christmas gift? Consider joining the American Dahlia Society. Check out the ADS website (that our own Sharon Swaney plays a part in maintaining) to see what ADS provides in products and articles.

www.dahlia.org/

Let’s move up the enrolment ladder if for no other reason than to get ahead of those “folks up north!” Currently we are tenth.

Colorado 57
Rhode Island 53
Carolinas 46
Central State 46
Georgia 46
Minnesota 43
National Capital 43
Michigan 39
Puget Sound 39
Dahlia Society of Ohio 38

Our ADS rep is Tony Evangelista. If you have any questions about ADS, he can help. ADS membership fee can be included with DSO dues. See back page of this Digest. Thanks for considering.
PHOTO CONTEST RULES

A. Dahlia Portrait of a Single Bloom
   Florets need to be within picture edges.

B. More than one bloom—only dahlias.

C. Dahlias and People—One or more blooms with one or more people.

D. Dahlias—Macro view but NO computer enhancements—close-up of part of a dahlia bloom or plant; may include insects.

- Photos are to have been taken in 2015.
- Maximum size is 5x7. No frames.
- Up to 3 entries may be submitted per category.
DID YOU KNOW?

According to specialtyproduce.com/produce/

Dahlias belong to the Asteraceae (Aster) family along with daisies and sunflowers. There are over 20,000 different species within the Aster family, it is the second largest family of flowering plants next to the orchid (Orchidaceae) family. The national flower of Mexico, dahlias today have become one of the most popular competition flower amongst competitive growers.

Applications

Dahlia's are most commonly used for decorative purposes on cakes, tarts and pastries. Serve alongside cheese or desserts as a garnish. Remove the petals of the dahlia and add them to grain or green salads to add a pop of color.

Geography/History

Dahlias are native to Mexico where they have been grown for centuries. From there they made their way to Spain via conquistadors who sent seeds of the flower to Madrid along with other seeds of plants and vegetables they had found growing during their explorations. The dahlia was given its name by botanist and director of the Royal Gardens of Madrid Antonio José Cavanilles, who named the flower after another botanist, Andres Dahl. Dahlias soon spread across Europe and from Mexico to the United States.
Basic Info on Storing Dahlias

No more shows—bummer! But hopefully a few days remain to enjoy our blooms, cut them and share them with friends as we await killing frosts. If you haven’t already, identify the varieties that showed virus as well as those that did poorly and discard them to become compost. (Hanu “the virus guy” says it is ok to compost virus plants if your compost is hot enough—suit yourself.) Once frost turns the plants black, cut the stalks about 6 inches from the ground, let them remain undisturbed for 4 or 5 days to start to set eyes, then dig.

Insert shovel about a foot from the stalk going around in a circle loosening the soil and lifting the clump. Some tubers have slim necks so be careful in the process. Once lifted, remove soil first with gentle shaking and then with water on the “shower” setting. Take clumps inside and let them dry for a day. (Don’t put them on concrete as the concrete will draw out the moisture too quickly.)

Snip off the feeder roots. Cut the stalk closer to the crown. If you want to wait until spring to divide the clump into individual tubers that’s fine, but now you should at least cut the clump in half down through the stalk. Whatever water was trapped in the heart of the clump is then released and rotting should not be an issue. If you want to divide the clump into individual tubers now, ideally you see eyes starting to form. Remember that chopping the tuber from the stalk without any crown
attached has rendered the tuber worthless for growing but is a possible entry for tonight’s salad or probably the compost pile is a better alternative. Whether half-clumps or individual tubers, some growers will soak the tubers in a 10% solution of bleach and water for a few minutes (around 10). By the way, the bleach solution should be applied to your tools between diggings and cuttings from plant to plant to kill any virus.

Before storing, let them dry perhaps for up to a day. Store in your favorite medium. I’ve been using fine vermiculite and 5-gallon pails with pretty good success. This year I am trying coarse vermiculite as I have been told by gurus that the coarse is better than the fine variety. The last couple years I’ve been storing as did Gene Woznicki using plastic buckets with layers of tubers and vermiculite partitioned with newspaper and plastic. Another method that has found favor is to wrap individual tubers in plastic wrap. That method sure saves on space. Oh, and don’t forget to mark the tubers as to variety. Ink pencils do the job very nicely.

I’ve become convinced that no matter what method you use, the key is an environment of 45 or so degrees that remains constant. I know a couple of our members stores their tubers in their refrigerator. If interested in details, let me know and I’ll get them in contact with you.

A great site for showing the plastic wrap method: [http://www.midwestdahliaconference.org/MDA/No_Fuss.htm](http://www.midwestdahliaconference.org/MDA/No_Fuss.htm)
The JUDGE’s Corner  
Ron Miner - baronminer@aol.com

A Very Special Bloom!

I would hazard a guess that the DSO is a better known organization this month than it was last month. There were two kinds of blooms on exhibit at the National Show on Long Island on the weekend of September 18. One kind was the bloom of Kenora Wildfire pictured on the right—and the other kind was “all the rest.” I had the privilege and pleasure of judging the head table with Ted Kennedy, Jerry Landerholm and a candidate judge from NY. Determining the best entry in the show was simply “no contest!” I really did not know that the Kenora Wildfire was brought to the show in a very long, partly white knuckles, car ride by our own Tony Evangelista! (I encourage you to follow a practice that I have adopted. That is to avoid looking in any detail at others’ buckets while they are setting up their entries. That Kenora Wildfire would have stood out like a very not sore thumb!)

Congratulations, Tony and Jackie! It was truly a once in a lifetime bloom. (Well, maybe a dozen in a life time for Tony.) A number of show participants told me that they had never seen a comparable bloom and foliage!

It wasn’t the only Honor Table entry Tony brought. The yellow bloom above was the Best Fully Double Seedling at the show. Tony will name the new cultivar Francesca Evangelista, after his sister. It will definitely be a competitive cultivar as an A SC Y. Look
out Trooper Dan! A highlight of the show for me was capturing the Best Open-Centered Seedling with one of our 2013 Blossom Gulch Seedlings, an orchette that is either a blend or a white blush. (TBD) :-)

The venue for the show was a large exhibit hall at Hofstra University on Long Island. It was a very nice hall and the setup arrangements worked pretty well. The number of blooms was lower than a typical National Show. You would understand that better if you had experienced the drive through New York City to get to Long Island.

**Another Great Picnic**

We enjoyed another great day at Carol and Brant’s Maple Crest Farm for the DSO picnic and judging seminar. The plants were in full bloom; the weather and the food were great. For the Judging Seminar, three teams judged three sets of ‘mystery’ dahlia plants and then discussed their analyses with the whole group. The results of the three teams agreed very well. Thanks Brant; thanks Carol for your hospitality!

**Peak of Maturity**

The “Guide to Judging Dahlias” tells us that a mature bloom, even with subtle faults, should beat an immature, clean bloom (p. 18). Further, it says (p. 36) that an immature bloom lacking depth is not better than a mature bloom with a tight center but also with minor faults. Consequently, we exhibitors tend to bring mature blooms that come close to, but hopefully stop short of(!)
having open centers. (I seem to have a lot of trouble staying on the closed center side of the line!) We also want to have “more to come” on the bloom.

There were a number of Badger Twinkles at the MVDS Show that illustrated the issues very well. The bloom on the head table (the top picture) was mature and clean and bright. I don’t remember who brought it, but it managed to be fully mature and retain its brightness. It was great. The blooms out on the show table illustrated several different levels of maturity.

The second bloom down was probably in the running for the head table but the larger center clearly shows that it was less mature than the bloom above it.

The third bloom is more mature than the one that made it to the head table—but the center is virtually gone. The center is not yet blown, but there are clearly no more ray florets to come before the disc florets are exposed. When there is “more to come,” the judge can still see a clear center in the bloom.

The bloom at the bottom has a blown center; i.e., you can see the disc florets in the center of the bloom. In this case, you need to look into the bloom from the right to see the disc florets. The disc florets are visible and the bloom “should be eliminated from further competition.” (GJD, p. 17) Visible disc florets on a fully double cultivar is the only fault in the GJD that has that consequence.

**DSO Seedlings**

Our DSO shows continue to feature a lot of seedlings. Part of that, I think, is the generosity of Kathy Iler when she
shared with us a ton of seeds from her open-centered seedling patch in Oregon. Those 2013 seedlings should make for a full table of Seedling Bench Evaluations at a lot of shows next year. They will also be the main feature of our final Judging Seminar for the year at the Petitti Garden Center Show. Thanks again, Kathy!

At the same time, a couple members of the DSO continue to produce great new fully double cultivars. Tony’s hand-crossed seedlings seem to win wherever he takes them, including winning at the National Show! In addition, Doc Hemminger keeps pumping out wonderful fully double seedlings. This new one, on the right, was on display at the DSO Show at Summit Mall and may be his best yet!

**Virus Update**

Professor Pappu made presentations recently both at the Midwest and the National Shows. The bottom line continues to be that you should throw out any plants that exhibit symptoms of virus on their leaves. As you continue that practice over a few years, the portion of virus free and/or virus tolerant plants in your garden will increase dramatically. In the past, we needed to guess whether a plant that looked bad needed something more in the soil or if it had virus. The brochure distributed with the June ADS Bulletin shows pictures of leaves that have virus, period, per the Professor.

Another key bit of information from the “Dahlia Doctor” is that Plants with symptomatic leaves will produce tubers with virus that will translate to plants with virus next year. Don’t save the tubers from plants that look (or looked!) like that. You don’t want to carry the virus over to next year. Additionally, make sure that you clean your tools between digging and dividing clumps of tubers. Professor Pappu believes that is the most common way that we transfer the virus from one plant to the next. A 10% solution of bleach in water is sufficient to kill the virus on your tools.

Perhaps the most exciting development on the virus front is that Jim and Carl Chuey were awarded the highest honor the ADS can bestow on an ADS member, the ADS Gold Medal. The award was given in recognition of their commitment to the elimination of virus in
our dahlia gardens. I had the privilege of presenting the Gold Medal to Jim at the Midwest Dahlia Conference Show—since we couldn’t talk Jim into going to the National. Congratulations and thanks again, Jim!

We are in the process of running an experiment that will add some hard data to some of Professor Pappu’s conclusions. If you can’t bear to throw away the rubers from an obviously bad plant, please at least mark them so you will be able to identify them in the spring. I anticipate having a lot more practical information about virus in our home gardens before next spring.

Classification Challenge

Do you remember the picture above of the big, white cultivar from my last column? I told you it was A sized, blush. The only question was Form. The best clue can be seen on the ray florets at around 5:30 on the bloom. The ray floret has a “wavy” cross-section, reminiscent of Goldilocks. The CHD says that the ray florets on an ID cultivar are “twisted, curled, or wavy…” The classification is therefore A ID W and the cultivar is KA’s Cloud. It was the highest scoring cultivar in the Trial Gardens last year.

Your assignment for the next column is to classify the Mystery bloom above on the right. It is about 5” in diameter. You might be able to guess the color from the photo and you should be able to determine the form. Check here again the shape of a cross-section of the ray florets.

Petitti’s Seminar

The main event at the traditional Judging Seminar at Petitti’s was practicing Seedling Bench Evaluation on triple entries of the 2013 Blossom Gulch seedlings. I’ll write about the results of that process next month.

Ron
DSO/ADS Membership Application
(Memberships are calendar year.)

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