Hi Dahlia Lovers,

If you get this Digest in time, stop by Petitti’s Oakwood this Saturday April 9 from 9 to 4 to help sell tubers or buy them for that matter. If you have some tubers to donate, bring them along. We can use them for the auction at our meeting next Friday the 15th as well. It’s an exciting time to get the season started.

At our March meeting, we voted to host the Midwest dahlia show in 2018. Recall that the last time we were hosts was 2010 at the Holiday Inn Independence. It was a terrific site and a wonderful show. Unfortunately HI is booked for the weekends of September 7-9 and 14-16, 2018, the two choices we have for the Midwest as the National show is scheduled for Philadelphia September 21-23, 2018. You can be a huge help by suggesting sites. You may check a site out yourself or give them to me and I’ll do the leg-work. I have a check-list of requirements a summary of which is given later in this Digest. Ask me for the complete details. Thanks for your help. We should have a site under contract by fall at the latest.

If you have an hour or two to devote to helping Mike and others propagate plants for our upcoming sales, please give him a call. Thanks once again to Tom Demaline of Willoway Nurseries in Avon for allowing us to use one of his greenhouses with a warming and misting system. Can’t do any better than that!!

Hope to see you at Petitti’s on the 9th and at our meeting on the 15th. Think Spring.

Jerry
Site Requirements for the Midwest Show 2018
A Summary

See me (Jerry) for details/questions.

If you are checking out a site, let me know so as not to duplicate. I’m willing to go with you if you like. Thanks for your help. Would like to have a site under contract by end of summer.

- September 7-9 preferred, or Sept 14-16, 2018.
  Friday 1:00—Sunday 5:00
- Within an hour’s drive for most in NE Ohio and shuttle service from airport
- Easy access to staging and show areas from drop-off—same level, no steps; easy access to water; large containers on wheels desirable
- 7000 sq. ft. for show, Court, etc.; 90 tables with covers plus 20 tables for staging area; vases provided by DSO
- Hospitality room with tables and chairs, snacks and beverages; room can double for business meeting
- Lunch and banquet—Saturday only
  If hotel, lunch and banquet for 80 people, est. Staging area can be used.
  If not hotel, restaurants, etc., in area
- Cost of facility
  If hotel, cost regarding number of room-nights
  If not hotel, cost of rental of space. Need list of hotels in the vicinity
WHAT SHOULD I BE DOING?
April and May

April
- If thinking of new beds—
  Dahlias like at least 6 hours of sun, air circulation
  Good mixture of sand, clay, silt, organic material
  Good drainage; tubers don’t like wet feet—will rot
  pH of between 6.5 and 7.0
- If planted a cover crop last fall, chop down and rototill in.
- Pull weeds; fertilize according to soil test analysis.
- Add leaf mold, compost, manure to your soil. Peat moss is
  acidic so check soil pH in case need to add lime
- Test soil (best in fall)—inexpensive soil test kits are ok
  for pH but a lab is needed for a complete and accurate
  analysis of your soil composition.
- Go to tuber sales at Petitti’s April 9 and DSO auction April 15.
- Start propagation indoors mid-April to plant in a month.

May
- Drive stake (5’ or more) and plant tuber or plant when soil
  reaches 55˚. A and AA 24”-36” apart, otherwise 18”-24”.
- Attach label to stake—name, size, form, color.
- If a tuber, dig hole 5-6” deep, place tuber horizontally eye up,
  cover with 2” of soil with time-release fertilizer, as plant grows
  fill hole, no water needed until see foliage growth.
- If a plant, water with a transplant solution. May break off one
  or two sets of lower leaves and plant a little deeper.
- SLUGS await to enjoy breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Find a fa-
  vorite way to eliminate them—physical removal, traps, barri-
  ers, baits. Ask Tony what he does. As the season progresses,
  other pests appear—earwigs, spider mites, stink bugs, aphids.
  Will discuss them next month.

The JUDGE’s Corner
Ron Miner - baronminer@aol.com

Blossom Gulch Seedlings
Our first set of Blossom Gulch seedlings are now in their
4th year where they can be considered for introduction as official ADS cultivars. Now is the time to submit them to the Trial Gar-
dens for evaluation. Take a look at the list of Trial Gardens on the ADS website. You will find that the dates for submission of tu-
bers and/or plants vary from one garden to another from April 1 to May 1. I would re-
commend sending an entry to at least 5 gar-
dens in order to have the best chance to qualify for a medal. I would also be inclined to include the Smoky Mountain Trial Gar-
den among the set because one of the field trips from the National Show will be to that
Trial Garden and many ADS members will have a chance to see your entry!

There are no set rules for the number of tubers you should have available in order to make a Trial Gar-
den entry. Ideally, you (and your commercial supplier who will introduce the new cultivar—nice, but not necessary) would have enough plants to meet the demand for tubers if your entry wins a medal. That could be a large number for the larger, fully double cultivars, perhaps 50. The bottom line for our open-centered BG seedlings would be less. I will keep enough tubers to grow some-
thing of the order of 15 or 20 plants. That is, I figure I need to have about 30 tubers in order to be able to submit 3 tubers each to 5 Trial Gardens.

Let me know if you need help with the process. Remem-
ber that Kathy Iler only asked us to send her a couple tubers of our successful cultivars as they are accepted by the ADS. What a
great trade, eh?! Thanks again, Kathy!
Virus Update

It appears that with Jim Chuey’s financial support, Washington State University will be able to provide a testing service for ADS members to evaluate plants for the presence of virus. At this writing, we are still in the process of working out the details of the project and just beginning to identify approaches to encourage growers to take advantage of the opportunity to better understand the extent of occurrence of virus in their gardens.

One concept that may help promote the testing project comes from the idea that the tubers that come from plants that were tested and determined to be free of virus should produce plants that are also free of virus. That assumes, of course, that care was taken in digging and dividing the tubers to keep the tools clean (cleaning in a 10% bleach solution between each plant, etc.). The tubers from those plants will be known as “G1” tubers, tubers that are the first generation descendants of plants known to be virus free. Those G1 tubers should be able to command enough added value to cover the cost of testing the parent plant. That cost is anticipated to be $15 for individual tests or as low as $10 for bulk testing. The full cost of testing would ordinarily be more like $70. The greatly reduced rate is simply a consequence of the generosity and the commitment of our friend and member, Jim Chuey and the Scheetz-Chuey Foundation. Thanks, Jim! Watch for more info on this opportunity in the June Bulletin of the ADS.

Classification Challenge

The classification challenge for you this month was to classify the cultivar pictured below. The form of this new cultivar is pretty clear. The split tips are immediately apparent and they do combine to achieve a fringed effect. Take a look at the definition of the Laciniate Form on page 4 of the 2016 Classification and Handbook of Dahlias (CHD). Split tips and achieving the fringed appearance are key elements of the definition for Laciniate dahlias.

The better, or tougher, question on this cultivar may be its color. The Guide to Judging Dahlias (GJD), p. 13, indicates that the judge should examine the color from a distance of about 3 feet: “if it is a blend, it will possess two or more distinct colors that are not a part of the same color class.”

Glenn Ruth used to tell us to look for color from a distance of at least an arm’s length. (The GJD says that, too, on p. 12.) The point is that the colors need to continue to be clear and distinct from a few feet from the bloom. It is clear in the picture, I hope, that the two colors would continue to be clearly visible at that distance.

Assume that the colors determined on the ray florets (closely observed, in this case) were DP19 and YL9. Is the cultivar a light blend or a dark blend? The first step in that process is to determine the dominant color in the bloom; the dark pink or the yellow. It is, no doubt, clear that the DP19 dominates over the yellow. The next step to answer that question, is to go to page 7 in the CHD and find which blend contains the dominant color, DP19. You will find that it is in the Light Blend list. The bloom is B sized (6” to 8” in diameter), so we end up with B LC LB DP19/YL9.

This new cultivar is Mt. View Neeser B. It scored in three Trial Gardens and in three Shows. Although the originator entered it as a Pink, it was scored three times as a Light Blend, twice as a Dark Pink and once as a Dark Blend. The majority prevailed to yield B LC LB.

Editor: As an aside, other cultivars in this 2510 B LC LB class are Jennie Pk/Wh, Just Married Pk/YL Nenekazi DP/YL Pinelands Princess LV/WH.
The Judging Challenge

Your judging challenge for this month was to identify the Form faults in the bloom at the right. I can’t resist digressing for some comments on the color. It is really attractive, isn’t it! What do you think about its color classification? We just went through a discussion of blends. Is this a blend, or not? We would use the same criterion as above. Can you see two colors at a distance of 3 feet? The answer is a little tougher here than it was above, right? The originator entered it as a Light Blend and two of the four Trial Gardens that scored it agreed. One of the others had it as a Dark Blend with a dominant color of BR20 (note that the BR20 falls in the Dark Blend list). The fourth Trial Garden classified it as a Flame Blend with colors of YL11 and RD5.

The lower picture on the right is of the same cultivar from the TG that ended up with a Flame Blend classification. Interesting, isn’t it, that the cultivar showed more yellow and less pink (red) in this fourth Trial Garden. While the red does not show up very well in this picture, the combination of YL11 with RD5 does yield a Flame Blend. This cultivar also had five scores in Seedling Bench Evaluation; three were Light Blend and two were Bronze. We thus ended up with a Light Blend classification for the CHD.

I need to apologize for misleading you last month. I said the cultivar was classified as a Pom; that is incorrect. It is a M FD.

Sorry! If you said that the ray florets at the equator were insufficiently involute to be a Pom, you were absolutely correct! (Would you believe that I was just checking to see if you were really looking? (Not!:))

In any case, the bloom is an example of the overlap between Formal Decorative cultivars and Ball/MBa/Pom cultivars. The form of an entry is basically determined by the shape of the ray florets at the equator of the bloom (GJD, p. 25). In these blooms, the florets near the center of the bloom are involute over most of their length but become less involute towards the equator and the back of the bloom. It is time to get out the CHD and check on the definitions. The Formal Decorative definition calls for florets that are generally flat, broad, and smooth. The BA/MBa/P definition calls for florets that are involute for most of their length and fully involute for “more than half their length.” The fourth Trial Garden (lower picture) came up with MBa for their classification; all the rest, including the SBE results, came up with what became the final classification: M FD.

One form fault for this entry would be, therefore, at least a subtle lack of conformance to the ideal definition. In a TG or SBE setting, the quantitative penalty for that fault should be a small portion of the 5 points (see p. 40, GJD) for conformance to the ideal. Why not a large portion? As I see it, the arrangement of the florets corresponds very well to the regular and uniform expectation specified in the FD definition. In addition, the florets are only slightly involute at the equator of the bloom. A 1.5 or 2 point penalty might be appropriate.

The lower bloom has another clear form fault across its center; but what about the upper bloom? In a show setting, I would want to look at the center of the bloom at a distance less than arms length. The bloom is past its peak of maturity and is close to blown. It is not “tight.” (GCD, p. 17, 35). In a show
setting, the upper bloom would be competitive, but could come in second against a bloom with a better center.

This new cultivar is Clearview Butterscotch, MFD LB OR17/YL16. It averaged over 87 both in the TGs and on the bench.

**Challenge for next month**

For next month, classify this bloom and list some of the faults you can identify.

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**Ron**

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**What is a Pot Root?**

If you are enamored with a particular variety and want lots of cuttings, or if a variety is not a good tuber producer create a pot root. This spring put a cutting in a 5" pot, give it high-potash fertilizer, water as usual. Pinch all flower buds forcing nutrients to tuber production versus flowers production. Then store the pot next winter in a 45-50˚ environment. Next spring the pot root will produce lots of shoots to use as cuttings.

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**Surprises on your Stored Tubers?**

**Fungus?** Spray/drench a tuber covered with a fungus with an organic fungicidal solution. There are commercial products as well as home-made recipes. For example, from Andy Vernon, mix 4 tablespoons apple cider vinegar, 1 tablespoon vegetable oil, 1 tablespoon molasses, and 1/2 tablespoon baking soda with 1 gallon of water.

**Long, white spindly growth?** Cut off back to 1/4” from the root eye. New growth should appear around the eye in time.

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**March Meeting Notes from Marilyn**

**Date, Time and Location**

- 7:30 pm—9:40 pm March 18, 2016 at the meeting room of Busch Funeral Home.

**President Report**

- Jerry opened the meeting at 7:30. 24 members were present. Mike Weber introduced three new members who attended a program he had presented for the Avon Garden Club the previous week. Ted and Donna Graczyk are the owners of Donna’s Dahlias in North Ridgeville. The two of them grow 8400 (!) plants and sell the cut flowers to wholesalers and florists. Tom Bauer also attended Mike’s presentation and decided to join DSO. Welcome to our three newest members.

- Several lists were distributed to get sign-ups for working tuber sales, providing refreshments for meetings, ordering 2016 Dahlias of Today, and ordering the new 1976-2016 Composite listing.

- Jerry informed members that he spoke at the Willowick Garden Club, Dave Cap spoke to a group of master gardeners, and Mike Weber spoke to the Avon Garden Club meeting.

**Treasurer Report**

- Sharon has paid our annual dues to the Botanical Garden, the Midwest Dahlia Conference, the Garden Club of Ohio, and sent $500 to the Gardeners of Greater Cleveland for scholarships. She continues to work on DSO gaining 501C3 status.

**Membership Report**

- Sharon announced that there are currently 81 DSO members and encourages those who have not paid dues for 2016 to do so as soon as they can.

**Corresponding Secretary Report**

- MaryAnn reported that 47 Digests were mailed by postal mail and 34 were emailed. Please consider getting your Digest by email to save postage costs.
First Vice President Report
◊ Sarah reviewed the programs for 2016 that include a tuber auction in April, plant auction in May, a guest speaker on carnivorous plants in June, the annual photo contest and a presentation by Tony Evangelista on organics and digging tubers in October. November speaker is open to suggestions. What would you like? ◊ The annual DSO picnic in August may be a garden tour and/or visit to a nature center. ◊ The holiday party will be December 3, Burntwood Tavern in Solon.

Second Vice President Report
◊ Jim reviewed the sales and show schedule for 2016 and encouraged members to donate time and tubers. ◊ Mike thanked Jerry, Bob, Rob, Dave, and Tom for their assistance in getting 150 tubers started two weeks ago. He reported that about 30% had “popped.” They will be moved soon to an area with heat and misting. There are many As and AAs that always seem to be in demand at the public sales. Tuber donations are still being taken.

New Business
◊ Jerry asked the membership present for suggestions for the 2016 Flower of the Year. After some discussion it was decided that “any Midwest origination” would be this year’s choice. A list of varieties that have been introduced by members of any of the 18 societies in the Midwest Conference would be compiled. ◊ Sharon mentioned that the artistic design theme categories for the DSO show in September are:
    * America the Beautiful, a formal design
    * Red, White, and Bloom, an informal design, accessories may be used
    * Support Our Troops, a linear design
◊ Jerry presented a request from the Midwest Conference for DSO to host the Midwest Show in 2018. He mentioned that he would chair the Site Committee, and Ron Miner would be the overall chair. He would ask Dave to be the Show Chair. After some discussion, the membership agreed. Jerry will write a list of items that are required for a site such as floor square footage, number of tables, water access, times. The list will be a check list for all those considering a site. He would like a site to be under contract by this fall.
◊ Since the national show in 2018 is in Philadelphia, September 21-23, the dates for the Midwest Show would ideally be September 7-9 or possibly September 14-16.
◊ It is customary for a Midwest society to donate to the host society of the Midwest show. Rob Swaney moved and Jim Thompson seconded a motion to donate $200 to the Minnesota Dahlia society, hosts of the 2016 Midwest Show.

Program
◊ Members enjoyed the New Introductions CD and refreshments provided by Sharon Swaney, Kathy Foith, Sarah Thompson, and Marilyn Weber. Mike Weber presented a demo on how to start tubers indoors to the new members.

PLEASE CONSIDER getting your Digest by email rather than postal mail. Every little bit helps the Society reduce its costs. Sharon provides the electronic Digest in three different formats for your convenience. Let Sharon Swaney or MaryAnn Moreno know if you want to receive the Digest electronically. Thanks.

Sharon: sharonswaney@windstream.net
MaryAnn: maryannjerry@windstream.net
DSO/ADS Membership Application

Please fill out completely (even for renewals).

Date: _____________________
Name(s): ______________________________________
Address: _______________________________________
_____________________________________
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PLEASE choose one of the following membership offerings:

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