Friday, April 21 Meeting
7:00 p.m.
Busch Community Room
7501 Ridge Road, Parma
Just south of Pleasant Valley Road

TUBER AUCTION
$3, $4, $5 SOLD!!!
Hi Dahlia Lovers,

Isn’t it exciting to getting close to identifying what dahlias we want to grow this year from the tried and true to new varieties to others that we saw at shows last year that we want to include in our own gardens this year? A part of that process is to come to our auctions and sales. The one at Petitti’s has already past but next Friday the 21st is our meeting auction. In May we will have a chance to buy dahlia plants that Mike and others have diligently been growing at Willoway for us to sell at our May 19 meeting as well as at Rockefeller (May 18-20) and Holden. (May 19-21).

A big project for this year and no doubt for future years is to strive for virus-free gardens. Ron Miner is heading the national project with testing being done at Washington State University. Locally we should all be vigilant in using planting and cutting tools that are dipped in a 10% bleach solution. One goal for the project is to identify varieties that are resistant to virus; another is to identify varieties that are tolerant of virus. Keith Hammet from New Zealand has been doing virus studies for many years. ADS has become serious about virus research more recently with genuine efforts going on now. Our virus mantra is “When in doubt, throw it out.” Apply this rule even to plants being started indoors.

Please bring whatever tubers you may have extras of to donate for our meeting auction April 21. We ask that the tubers are clean and well marked with name, size, form, and color. Thanks. Don’t forget to bring along a container to carry home your potential winners in this year’s shows! See you soon. THINK SPRING!

Jerry
OFFICERS and CHAIRS

Jerry Moreno, President................................. 440-543-5658
Mike Weber, Past President............................... 440-647-3162
Sarah Thompson, 1st Vice President.................216-926-7419
Jim Thompson, 2nd Vice President....................216-926-7419
Sharon Swaney, Treasurer and Membership.........330-562-3296
Marilyn Weber, Recording Secretary...............440-647-3162
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.............440-729-9714
Nancy Riopelle, Sunshine Chair........................330-483-3360
Tony Evangelista, ADS Representative............440-867-3711
Sharon Swaney, Webmaster..............................330-562-3296

REFRESHMENTS

Marilyn Weber
Teressa Nemeth
Jackie Evangelista

MEETING DATES for 2017

March 17  New Introductions; Expert Dahlia Panel
April 21  Tuber auction
May 19   Plant auction
June 16  Panel on Hybridizing
August 19 Picnic at Aurora Nature Center; Judging seminar afterwards at Ron’s (optional)
October 20 Speaker tbd; Dividing/storing-Dave
November 17 Photo contest; Speaker tbd
December 2 Holiday party, Burntwood Tavern, Solon
Vacationing in the Netherlands this September?

If so, be sure to visit the village of Zundert where Van Gogh was born. There is a parade in his memory the first Sunday in September featuring dahlia floats. How many dahlias do you think are in this float?

DAHLIA HYGIENE

Be sure to sanitize blades after each plant before moving to the next. This applies even if the next plant came from the same tuber clump as the previous one. Although corrosive, the proven disinfectant for tools is a solution of 10% household bleach and 90% water. Note that the half-life of the solution is 2 hours. To use the solution, swish the tool in the solution for a few seconds then rinse with water. Protect skin throughout. Antibacterial wipes and sprays (Lysol) are not very effective against dahlia viruses. Studies are being done to see if the use of nonfat dry milk solution can be used instead of bleach.

Yellow sticky traps can be effective in minimizing insect damage and disease transfer when you are still growing the plants in an enclosed area.
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 turn over.
- 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 the DSO auction meeting April 21.
- 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 favorite way to eliminate them—physical removal, traps, barriers, baits. Ask Tony what he does. As the season progresses, other pests appear—earwigs, spider mites, stink bugs, aphids. Will discuss them next month.
- Go to the Rockefeller and Holden sales and DSO auction.
The JUDGE’s Corner
Ron Miner - baronminer@aol.com

Virus

I need again to start with a quick note on the virus projects. Our friend, colleague, and benefactor, Mr. Jim Chuey is again going to provide the financial support to let the ADS take on another aggressive set of analyses this summer. Thank you, Jim!

There will be a lot more information available in the June Bulletin and on the ADS website for these programs. The one that will affect us most is free testing of plants that come from G1 tubers(!). That will include the plants that Mike and Doc grew from G1 tuber cuttings. To be eligible for free testing, the 2017 plants will need to be traceable back to the clean plants in 2016. The name of the person who submitted the plant in 2016, the name of the cultivar, and the 2016 sample number will be required.

I recently had the opportunity to chat with an ADS member who sent a set of 12 leaf samples to Prof. Pappu for virus analysis. His was one of two sets of samples where no virus was detected in any of the samples submitted. In the second clean garden, only 5 samples were submitted. I asked him about his strategy for minimizing or eliminating virus in his garden. His answer was music to my ears: “I pull out any plant that shows any sign of virus. I probably throw out some plants that don’t have virus; but I do not want to risk leaving a plant with virus in my garden.” My friends, “If in doubt, pull it out!”

Color!

The “riot of color” that develops in our dahlia gardens by mid-summer and lasts through Fall is one of the nicest attributes of our dahlias. It is that ‘riot of color’ that first strikes you when you walk into a dahlia show in the morning after a night of staging. It is that ‘riot of color’ that will bring the public over to the show tables, many starting with the question “Are those things real!!?” In short, the colors displayed in our dahlias and our dahlia gardens are one of their most important attributes.

Sorting out the relative merits of those colors will be one of the most important pieces of the judging process you will encounter at the show. I know that you all know where to begin the process of knowing
how to assess those merits: the ADS “Guide to Judging Dahlias” (GJD). Pages 9 to 16 cover the basics, but there are lots of additional references to color throughout the manual.

There is also a lot of important information on color in the “Classification and Handbook of Dahlias” (CHD). In particular, the CHD is the only place where you will find instructions on how to classify color on open-centered cultivars like our Blossom Gulch seedlings. The characterization of those colors can get complicated. Page 6 of the 2017 CHD is the place to look for the answer.

Perhaps the easiest way to see a quick summary of color attributes is on the backs of the seedling score sheets. (You can find a miniature version of the score sheets in the back of the CHD.) The back with the table of attributes provides a list of desirable and undesirable traits. The lists can serve as a handy reminder of the characteristics you need to think about when you are standing at a show table.

**Color Quality**

One of the first characteristics of color that is discussed in the GJD is the presence of gray in the florets. For me, that is one of the more difficult faults to identify. Last year, however, I had a seedling that was gray! It is pictured on the right with the white page out of the ADS color chart. The picture looks a little pink or purple here—but, as far as I could tell at the time, it was just plain gray. I was tempted to keep it as an example of a color fault. I concluded, however, that it was sufficient to keep the WH0 orchette on the right as a good example of color quality. The color of the sheet on which the color chips are presented was recently added as a ‘color chip’ as WH0. It is a very bright white.
The presence of gray mixed in with another color is harder to see. It may cause “a dirty color quality” (GJD, p. 11). The color charts of the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) included color chips that added gray (black) to most colors. My Earl Miner, BB FD P, on the right actually best matched an RHS chip that was dark red plus gray/black. The picture on the right does not capture the color particularly well, but, at its best, the color would not have been characterized as ‘bright’ and ‘clear.’

The point is that when you are looking at an entry in the Trial Garden, for example, or comparing entries on the show table, you need to think in terms of a scale that runs between dull and bright or gray and clean. Then you need to decide where your entries fall on that scale. An entry that is bright and clear deserves a significantly higher rating than one that leans toward the dull and gray end of the scale.

The foregoing comments relate to the quality of the basic ‘self-colored’ or solid colored dahlia. Of course, it is not sufficient just to characterize the fundamental quality of the color. The typical color faults can be easier to find, but you should not lose sight of the importance of evaluation of the basic quality of the color.

Color Faults

The GJD lists a number of color “imperfections” on self-colored dahlias (GJD, p.11). “Conspicuous green bracts at the base of a ray floret” and “individual ray florets of a color different from other florets” are among the examples cited. “Judges must score down these and other genetic characteristics.” On the show bench these faults are one consideration among a lot of characteristics. The GJD argues, however, that in the evaluation of seedlings with a tendency for conspicuous bracts or wolf petals, the faults should be penalized more severely since it is a genetic characteristic that will persist in future generations of the cultivar.

The other faults discussed on self-colored dahlias relate to the uniformity of the distribution of color. The color “should be evenly distributed without a blotchy, streaked, veined, or granular appearance at approximately arm’s length.”

Ron
March Meeting Notes from Marilyn

Date, Time and Location
7:10 pm—9:40 pm March 17, 2017 at the meeting room of Busch Funeral Home.

President Report
Jerry opened the meeting at 7:10.
James C. Moore was a president of the ADS and the Southtown Dahlia Society. He passed away in 2011. He provided bronze medals for Midwest dahlia societies to use in the name of celebration. Jerry presented the medal to Bob Wenning for his dedication to the society, often behind the scenes, in all of its functions and for being DSO’s dahlia ambassador. One sees Bob striking up a conversation with anyone even remotely interested in the dahlia. Thanks Bob for all that you do for DSO.

Treasurer Report
Sharon announced that officially we have 501C3 IRS status. Money Market balance is $12,738.03. Memorial Fund is $1848.34 and checking $153.80. Jim Chuey has donated $2000 to be used for our putting on the Midwest Conference in 2018.

Membership Report
Sharon announced that there are currently 92 DSO members. 47 of them also belong to ADS.

Corresponding Secretary Report
MaryAnn reported that 49 Digests were mailed by postal mail and 40 were emailed. Please consider getting your Digest by email to save postage costs.

First Vice President Report
Sarah is emailing potential speakers for October and November meetings.
August 19th is the confirmed date for this year’s picnic.
The holiday luncheon is December 2nd at Burntwood Tavern, Solon.

Second Vice President Report
Dave reviewed the show and sales schedules and circulated sign-up sheets to assist with all sales.
ADS Report
◊ Tony reported on the Genome Project. This is a project that ADS is taking on to know what the genetics of the dahlia are. Discussion also was held about the DSO propagations of tubers that were tested as virus free.

Sunshine Report
◊ Nancy was not present but Jerry will ask her to send a card to Randy Foith who had shoulder surgery recently.

Old Business
◊ There was a reminder that DSO is hosting the Midwest Show in 2018. Boutique and free items are being made by Barbara Miner, MaryAnn Moreno, and others. Contact them if you want to help.

New Business
◊ It was moved, seconded, and passed to continue to donate $500 to the Garden Club of Greater Cleveland for their scholarships.
◊ It was moved, seconded, and passed to donate $300 to the Central States Dahlia Society to help pay expenses in hosting the 2017 Midwest Show.
◊ Jerry, Barb Hosta, and Mike Weber will review the DSO by-laws.
◊ Sharon, Marilyn, and Barb Miner will plan artistic design themes with Dave Cap for our Summit and Petitti’s shows.
◊ Jim and Sarah Thompson, Emily Halderman, and Anna Kandra are working on suggestions to develop new memberships.

Adjournment
◊ The business meeting adjourned at 7:45.
◊ The 50-50 raffle was held.
◊ Thanks to Sarah Thompson, Mike Weber, and Harriet Chandler for refreshments and to Rob Swaney for taking care of beverages.

Program
◊ The ADS video on New Introduction was shown.
◊ A panel consisting of Harriet Chandler, Jim Chuey, and Tony Evangelista was held in which they shared a lively discussion on many ideas on the growing of dahlias and their maintenance.
DSO/ADS Membership Application  
(Memberships are calendar year.)  
Please fill out completely (even for renewals).  

Date: _____________________  
Name(s): ______________________________________  
Address: _______________________________________
_______________________________________
_______________________________________  
Phone: ___________  Alt Phone: ___________  
Email(s): _______________________________________

PLEASE choose one of the following membership offerings:

- [ ] DSO Individual  $15
- [ ] DSO Family  $20
- [ ] DSO Individual + ADS Individual  $39
- [ ] DSO Family + ADS Individual  $44
- [ ] DSO Family + ADS Family  $47

Snowbirds: Add $6 and enter winter address here:  
_______________________________________
_______________________________________

Would you like to receive your Digest in digital format only?  
(Be sure to include an email address above) Please circle:

- Yes  
- No

Please make checks payable to DSO.

Mail to: Sharon Swaney  
340 Aurora-Hudson Rd.  
Aurora, OH 44202
DAHLIA SOCIETY of OHIO
MaryAnn Moreno
8232 Westhill Drive
Chagrin Falls, OH 44023