

# DAHLIA DIGEST

**Dahlia Society of Ohio**

Since 1930

2019 \* ISSUE 4 \* JUNE 2019

## **Next Meeting:**

**Friday, June 21, 7 PM  
Busch Community Room  
7501 Ridge Road, Parma**



## **Program:**

**Nancy Riopelle on “How to Raise  
Monarch Butterflies”**

**INSIDE: Meet a Member—Anna Kandra;  
Ron Miner on judging tips and Elkhart report;  
Tony Evangelista on tending dahlias for show.**

# MORENO'S MEMO

## Greetings Dahlia Lovers,

By the time you receive this Digest hopefully the torrential rains of May will just be a bad memory and June will be much warmer and dryer, especially dryer. If only there were a way to have saved some of those wet days for August! But it is what it is and we need to cope.

If you are not planning on going to the National/Midwest show in Grand Rapids, Michigan over Labor Day weekend, be sure to look into whatever county fairs are in the area to show your dahlias, especially if you have never shown before. For example, many of us who are going to Michigan this year usually show at the Geauga County Fair. Please consider entering the Geauga show as with several of us gone, they will be in need for blooms, big time. However, keep in mind that you need to register by the beginning of August. You cannot register thereafter.

There's an outside chance that someone will be giving me a tree dahlia sometime later this year or next. Have any of you grown a tree dahlia? Any special care needed? Let me know. Also, our DSO Constitution prohibits me from running for another term as president next year. Please consider stepping up to the plate and running for the office. Thanks for considering.

Thanks for all who helped in propagating, transporting, and selling tubers and plants this year. Our plant sales were amazing as Rockefeller sold out in two days and Holden was 80% out in one and completely out in two. Nothing was available for the third day at either site. As Rob and I packed up at Holden Saturday afternoon, we had two plants left, Verda and Wyn's Neon Dream. Unbelievably, a woman caught us as we were leaving and asked if we had two dinner plates by any chance!! Wyn's fit the bill and Verda isn't quite a dinner plate, but it was close enough for her. That was amazing.

Sure hope that you can make it to the June meeting. I am really looking forward to hearing our member Nancy Riopelle tell us all about Monarch butterflies. As you may recall from a few years ago, she and husband Buzz told us all about the beehives they maintain at their River Ridge Honey Farm. (Yup Buzz is his name even before he got into bees!) See you on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

Jerry

## COMING UP

### June 21 Program: Survival of Monarchs

At our June 21st program Nancy Riopelle will take us through the steps involved in raising Monarch butterflies, an avocation that is becoming vital as habitat is lost. To pique your interest, some of the steps are shown in her photos below: Left, how she cuts the egg sacs and puts them on larger leaves indoors; middle, a baby Monarch caterpillar; right, a chrysalis. Also, Jim Thompson has provided us with 12 milkweed plants that will be available for sale to those who might want to try attracting Monarchs. Note that we are featuring on the cover Nancy's photo, entitled "A Monarch on Frizzy Lizzy," that won first place in the photo competition at the ADS National Show last year in the "Digital Darkroom" category.



**PLAN TO ATTEND DSO PICNIC:** This enjoyable event will again be held at the Moebius Nature Center in Aurora on Saturday, Aug. 3, at noon. Bring your favorite dish. Karen Jeric and Debbie Findlay are in charge of arrangements. After the picnic, Ron Miner will help us get warmed up for show season by moderating a discussion about judging at shows.

**DAHLIA SALES SWELL DSO TREASURY:** Our dahlia sales this year brought in a total of \$3,773 including \$1099 from the April tuber auction, \$468 from the May plant sale, \$1092 from the Holden Arboretum sale, and \$1114 from the Rockefeller Garden sale. Congratulations to all who played a role in making this possible including Mike Weber, who was in charge of getting volunteers and producing the plants from cuttings at Willoway Nurseries in Avon Lake, Rob Swaney, who ran the sales at Holden, and Dave Cap, who took charge at Rockefeller.

# ELKHART MIDWEST MEETING

by Ron Miner, [baronminer@aol.com](mailto:baronminer@aol.com)

The annual Spring Meeting and Dahlia Auction of the Midwest Dahlia Conference was held on Saturday, June 1, in Elkhart, Indiana. As usual, it was a great opportunity to get together with dahlia friends from across the Midwest Conference and to get some dahlias to fill those last minute holes in our gardens. The featured speaker this year discussed the best ways to encourage the 140 species of bee pollinators in our yard and gardens. Perhaps the simplest summary of the interesting presentation was to leave as much of your yard in a natural state as you can and to very carefully follow the instructions of any insect control chemicals you feel compelled to use.

For me, the biggest difference in this year's auction was the availability of a large number of plants that were grown from tubers that had been tested the previous year(s) and found to be free of virus (Gx plants). Great news! Most of those plants came from the hard work of Mike Weber and his crew propagating our plants at Willoway Nursery. Dave hauled a big batch of plants out to Elkhart in his dahlia-mobile. Rick Peters and Tony Evangelista did a great job of auctioning those special plants to the audience. I hope I contributed a bit to the success of that sales job by summarizing the results of the "cutting experiment" I ran in my garden last summer.

The story of the "ugly duckling" seedling on the right is compelling. (It started out in 2015 as a reasonably nice bicolor AN.) Basically the seedling tested negative for virus year after year even though it had been grown in intimate proximity to plants known to be virused. In fact, this cultivar had never tested positive for virus. We were speculating about how best to test it to see what made it unique. However, in September, 2018, I used a pair of cutters to cut a plant with virus and then made one cut on this other-wise-always-clean plant. Within two weeks, it was positive for virus! The audience "heard" that remarkable bottom line: Clean your tools between cutting plants or you will transfer virus! Two things are required to reduce the incidence of virus in our dahlia gardens: 1) start with the cleanest stock possible and 2) avoid transferring virus by **disinfecting tools between plants**.



# TIMING DAHLIAS FOR SHOW

by Tony Evangelista

Timing dahlias for shows is not an exact science as you have probably discovered. This article is about a tool that may help—a chart that is on the back of the Minutes folded inside this newsletter. It was developed by Nick Kozopas, a dahlia grower extraordinaire who is no longer with us. Note his initials in the bottom right corner. I have used this chart for the past 40 or so years as a general guide.

Nick was simply the best dahlia grower I ever knew. His garden was a literal dahlia jungle filled with the most vigorous plants I have ever seen. He had wooden barrels to collect rain water; then he put manure in them and used that to water his plants. He was using “compost tea,” which I have written about, long before it's time!

Nick's chart gives several ways to get a fix on whether a certain dahlia will be ready for a certain show. The first section labeled on the right “Top or Pinch.” assists you in determining how many days before a show you should top or pinch a given dahlia depending on its size so that you may have a flower for a certain show. First, insert the dates/locations of the shows you plan to attend in the blanks to the left of the word “Shows.” Then, using a calendar, count backward from those dates to find the date that you may need to top or pinch in order to have dahlias for the shows you have listed. So, for example, if you want flowers for the Mahoning Valley Dahlia Society Show on Aug. 23, you would pinch AA's-A's on June 19, A's on June 25, B's on July 7, B's-BB's on July 13; and BB's-Min on July 17.

The other two sections allow you to better determine when buds that develop after topping might be ready for a show. So, in the case of our Mahoning Valley Dahlia Society show example, A-size dahlias should have buds the size of peas 28 days before the show, which would be by July 27; B-size 24 days before the show or July 31; Poms 21 days before the show or Aug. 3; BB's 20 days before the show or Aug. 4; and Mins/Other 18 days before the show or Aug. 6. If you've lost track of these dates, the final section allows you to guesstimate whether a given bud will be ready for show. For example, if you have an A-size bud that is 1.5 inches wide, it should bloom and be ready for a show in 14 days.

Average temperatures, rainfall and varietal differences will definitely influence the chart. Nick had a notebook and took copious records from year to year to track such things. I urge you to keep your own records. It would be interesting to compare notes at the end of the season to see how closely our experiences match Nick's system.

## MEET A MEMBER

Life for DSO Treasurer Anna Kandra and her family has long revolved around gardening and especially our favorite flower, the dahlia. Her parents, Karen and Tony Colini, have operated Sweet Bay Gardens at their farm in Auburn Township for over 30 years, Anna and Karen have grown dahlias since 2009, and this summer they will add a flower farm to the business encouraged mainly by Anna's sister, Katie. They expect to have 1,000 dahlias producing flowers for sale direct to florists and at a farm stand at the road.

Anna began growing dahlias in 2009 to use for her wedding. Because the event was scheduled in late July, when dahlias aren't yet very plentiful, they had to raise them in their greenhouse.



**ANNA KANDRA**, top left, is shown with her husband, Steve, stop right, and children: Elliot, Valerie, and Nolan.

“All it took was one season to become hooked,” Anna said.” She is one of the few women who grows dahlias solo in our group. While her husband, Steve, helps rototill on occasion, she plants, tends, digs and divides by herself while also doing bookkeeping for her parent's business, and mothering three children, Elliot, 8; Valerie, 6; and Nolan, 3.

When asked what she enjoys most about dahlias, Anna said, “I love the variety of shapes, sizes, and colors. Each one is just a little bit different, but they're all so beautiful. I also enjoy having blooms late into the

fall. When so many of the other plants are finished for the season, the dahlias are happy to continue putting on a show.” Her favorite dahlia is Santa Claus, a red and white BB informal decorative.

Showing dahlias is not a main focus for Anna and her mother, but they do occasionally bring blooms to the Geauga County Fair and the Petitti's Show. Anna typically grows about 70 in her yard and also helps her Mom with hers. Their interest in the flower revolves more around the pleasure of gardening and making arrangements.



**ANNA GREW** dahlias for her wedding arrangements, one shown above.

Anna also enjoys reading, running, curling and watching Indians games. Wait, curling? Yes, curling--the recreational, not competitive, side of the sport. She had family friends who played at a local club and found the Columbus Curling Club after graduating from the Ohio State University and taking a job there. She then joined the Mayfield Curling Club, which plays at a Mayfield Country Club rink that is specifically designed for curling, after moving back to the area. At present, she is on hiatus because her children's activities don't allow for team participation. She says that after the American curling team did so well at the Turin Olympics in Italy, interest in the sport began growing rapidly. In 2018, the American men won the curling Gold Medal.

The DSO is fortunate that Anna also has financial skills and was willing to recently assume the position of treasurer from Sharon Swaney. Those skills result from Anna having a BSBA degree in Financial Risk Management and Insurance from OSU and an MBA from Kent State University. While living in Columbus, she took a position with Hamilton Capital Management in private wealth management. However, frequent long trips up I-71 to visit family motivated her to move back home, where she met her husband, Steve, and worked for a time at Developers Diversified Realty in capital markets doing all the financing for their real estate purchases.

After their children were born, Anna left full time work and began doing bookkeeping for Sweet Bay Gardens, which has given her time for her family, for growing dahlias and being our treasurer among many other activities. For details about Sweet Bay Flower Farm, go to [www.sweetbayflowerfarm.com](http://www.sweetbayflowerfarm.com).

# JUDGE'S CORNER

by Ron Miner - [baronminer@aol.com](mailto:baronminer@aol.com)

Yes; it is growing time again! It seems like it takes forever to arrive and then it is over in just a couple blinks of an eye!

## Big Picture

The DSO has a long tradition of team judging based on a discussion of the attributes of the entries in the classes judged. Even though that is the approach recommended by the ADS, you may find judging teams (at the upcoming National Show in Michigan, for example) where the team leader discourages discussion. If you find yourself in that situation, I encourage you to persevere. A key benefit in judging with judges from outside our own club is to learn how they approach the judging process. So, ask away! Provide your observations politely and respectfully and listen carefully and respectfully to the other team members.



*Judge's "instructions meeting" at the National Show in 2012. Expect the teams to vary in approach.*

A brochure on the responsibilities of the team leader was developed by Bob Schroeder, the ADS judging chair. It was distributed to our DSO judges and is available on the ADS website. It very well describes the inter-active discussion approach we use in the DSO. It is a good idea to review its contents at least once each season, along with the other sources of judging information with which you need to be familiar: The Guide to Judging Dahlias (GJD), The Classification and Handbook of Dahlias (CHD), and fronts and the backs of the Seedling Evaluation Scorecards. To be an effective and competent ADS Judge, you need to have a working knowledge of all of those documents. Very few judges will be able to quote the specific contents of the GJD; but we all should be able to provide informed opinions on the basis of our reading and our understanding of all of those documents.

The Seedling Scorecards provide a very useful shorthand version of the contents of the GJD. It is always a good idea to take a look at those documents before each show so that the general judging criteria are fresh in your mind. The scoresheets are included at the end of the CHD. That should be in your pocket and available in every judging situation!

### **Judging in a Dahlia Show**

Okay, in a couple months, you will have gathered some dahlias from your garden, staged them in show vases, and put them out on the show tables. You are ready to judge. Do you have the show schedule and your CHD in your judging apron? How about a small tape measure? The local judging chairperson will ordinarily call the group of judges together to go over his or her expectations. You need to listen to and follow those instructions carefully.

When you get your judging assignment, you need to quickly move to your assigned area. Stay with your team during judging; don't be distracted by any other issues. If you are the team leader, make sure that everyone knows everybody else on the team, including the clerk. Make sure that the less experienced judges on your team know that they should be comfortable in providing inputs and in raising questions whenever they wish. Encourage their inputs if they appear hesitant to provide it.

Be aware that every entry in every class deserves your attention. You do not need to agonize over every detail but you do need to make sure that every entry is observed and evaluated. Listen to and respect the observations of the other team members. Provide your observations, particularly when they differ from the others on the team. Participate in the decision-making process and adopt the team's decision as your own.

Proceed through your judging assignment as quickly as you can and ask the judging chair if there are other assignments for your team before you separate. Remember Glenn's rules: Enjoy the judging process and learn something while you are interacting with your colleagues!

### **Judging Seminars**

We will have two upcoming judging seminars after the picnic this summer and after judging at the Petitti's Show on October 5th.



## **JUNE REFRESHMENTS**

**Pat Sadataki, Chair**

**Anna Kandra and Kathy Foith**

If you are able to bring refreshments in June, please e-mail Pat at: [sadataki@aol.com](mailto:sadataki@aol.com). She will let you know if more contributors are needed.

## **2019 OFFICERS, CHAIRS & FACILITATORS**

**President** Jerry Moreno . . . . . 440-543-5658  
**Treasurer** Anna Kandra . . . . . 440-724-2944  
**Membership Chair** Nancy Riopelle. . . . . 330-483-3360  
**Recording Secretary** . . . . . **Open—Need a Volunteer**  
**Corresponding Secretary** MaryAnn Moreno. 440-543-5658  
**Webmaster** Sharon Swaney . . . . . 330-562-3296  
**Digest Editor & Publicity** Jackie Evangelista 440-352-8378  
**Refreshments Chair** Pat Sadataki. . . . . 219-314-3880  
**Sunshine Chair** Joann Bendokaitis . . . . . 440-221-6447  
**Shows Chair** Dave Cap . . . . . 440-888-5589  
**Judging Chair** Ron Miner . . . . . 440-543-1516  
**Propagation Chair** Mike Weber . . . . . 440-647-3162  
**Archives & Librarian** Barbara Hosta . . . . . 216-729-9714  
**Cleveland Botanical Rep** Barbara Hosta . . . 216-729-9714  
**ADS Representative** Tony Evangelista . . . . . 440-867-3711  
**Meeting Program Facilitators:** Barbara Hosta, March; Nancy Riopelle, June; Karen Jeric and Debbie Findlay, August Picnic; Karl Southerland, October; Sarah and Jim Thompson, November; and Joyce Southerland and Joann Bendokaitis, December holiday luncheon.

**THANKS TO ALL FOR HELPING THE DSO!**

# DSO/ADS Membership Application

(Memberships are calendar year.)

**Please fill out completely (even for renewals).**

For Year: 20 \_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone(s) (land line): \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Email(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Choose one of the following membership offerings by checking the box before the offering.

**Do not write in the gray boxes.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	DSO Individual	\$15			
<input type="checkbox"/>	DSO Family	\$20			
<input type="checkbox"/>	DSO Individual + ADS Individual	\$39			
<input type="checkbox"/>	DSO Family + ADS Individual	\$44			
<input type="checkbox"/>	DSO Family + ADS Family	\$47			

**For ADS "Snowbird" service add \$6.**

**Enter winter address here:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Check here if you want your Digest digital format only.

**Please make checks payable to DSO.**

**Mail to: Nancy Riopelle  
701 W. River Rd  
Valley City, OH 44280**



**DAHLIA SOCIETY OF OHIO**  
**MaryAnn Moreno**  
**8232 Westhill Drive**  
**Chagrin Falls, OH 44023**

- If you haven't paid your dues yet, please do so at the April meeting or send in the form on page 11.
- Visit the DSO website at: [www.dahliasocietyofohio.org](http://www.dahliasocietyofohio.org).
- Follow the DSO Facebook Page.