

# DAHLIA DIGEST

**Dahlia Society of Ohio**

Since 1930

VOL 2020 \* ISSUE 1 \* MARCH 2020

## **Next Meeting:**

**Friday, March 20, 7 PM  
Busch Community Room  
7501 Ridge Road, Parma**



## **Program:**

**Lisa Rainsong: “Gardening for a Concert”  
and the ADS New Introductions Slide Show**

**INSIDE: Meet a Member—Mike Weber; Ron Miner on  
becoming a judge and growing seedlings; Tony  
Evangelista on virus; and other dahlia news**

# MORENO'S MEMO

## Hi Dahlia Lovers,

Are you enjoying the relatively mild winter we have been having – so far? Mike and his volunteer members will be starting to propagate plants for sale about the time you get this Digest. If you have any tubers to donate, bring them to the March meeting. Be sure that they are clean and well-marked as to name, size, form, and color and whether or not they have come from a tested virus-free parent. Thanks.

The DSO Board and others met January 17 to plan 2020. The schedule of programs is elsewhere in this Digest as well as the dates for Sales and Shows. Our Flower of the Year for 2020 is Jackie Mae Staas, an introduction by Tony Evangelista. We plan on propagating several plants for sale at our May Auction. It is a beautiful BB IC LB PK/Y bloom.

I hope that you were able to attend the GLOW Holiday Program held at the Cleveland Botanical Garden last December at which DSO entered a wreath decorated by Barbara Hosta, Sharon Swaney, and Kathy Foith. Thanks Gals! The wreath, named “Dahlias – The Little Darlings,” was really neat focusing on the smaller varieties since the theme of the show was “Tiny Treasures.” You’ll see it pictured on the cover of this Digest. Also, Sharon has revised our website. She has really outdone herself. Take a look at: <https://dahliasocietyofohio.org>. Super thanks, Sharon!

It is with deepest sadness that I just learned about the passing of George Newberger at age 96. Of gentle, kind, caring men, George was at the top of the list. He was a soil and water conservationist with the US Department of Agriculture for 31 years. He enjoyed photography, astronomy, traveling, wood-working, any outdoor activity, bluebirds and dahlias, of which he grew hundreds sharing bouquets with his church and local businesses. I remember his presentation on bluebirds with Ric Mattmuller at a DSO meeting. He made beautiful wooden plaques in the shape of Ohio for the Court winners when we hosted the 2003 National Dahlia Show. See his obituary and photo at: <https://www.record-courier.com/obituaries/20191219/george-newberger>. Rest in peace dearest friend. Rest in peace.



**Jerry**

# MARCH PROGRAM

Lisa Rainsong, whose life combines music, natural history, and education, will open our eyes at our March meeting with a slide show on a topic most of us likely have not thought about: “Gardening for a Concert: Creating Concert Halls for Nature’s Music from Parks to Your Backyard.”

Lisa holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in Composition from the Cleveland Institute of Music and is a member of the Music Theory faculty. She is also a soprano who has performed as a soloist and choral musician specializing in Medieval, renaissance, and Baroque music. The following excerpts from the Institute’s webpage about her at: <https://www.listeninginnature.com/about> best describe her unique work.

“As she became increasingly interested in teaching the songs of earth’s first musicians — birds, crickets, katydids, amphibians — she earned a



Naturalist Certificate from the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, focusing on field work. She now teaches classes and presents programs on in-service training in the music of nature throughout Ohio. She is also a field recordist, and her programs feature her own field recordings and photos.

“Lisa’s field research on the crickets and katydids of Northeast Ohio includes surveys for park districts throughout the region and research grant projects. Her online field guide, ‘Listening to Insects,’ can be found at <http://listeningtoinsects.com>.

“Her educational blog, ‘Listening in Nature,’ has five years of educational tutorials and stories from the field about her exploration of birdsong, insect song, and amphibian song: <http://listeninginnature.blogspot.com>.” Thanks to Barbara Hosta for arranging this truly unique program.”

# DAHLIA NEWS

## Order *Dahlias of Today* at March Meeting

Midwest Dahlia Conference President Randy Foith will be taking orders at our March meeting for *Dahlias of Today* a publication produced annually by the Puget Sound Dahlia Association (PSDA). The cost is \$12 pre-paid at the meeting.

This year's edition will include:

- A look at new varieties around the Northwest seen at Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers shows as well as the Pacific Northwest Trial Garden at Point Defiance Park in Tacoma.
- An article by Ken Greenway on propagating dahlia cuttings.
- Tutorial by Steve and Sandy Boley on dahlia breeding.
- Feature articles about Linda DeRooy Homes-Cook from Wenatchee, WA, and Peter Haslhofer of Austria.
- An extensive advertising section and full-color photography.

## Mark your calendars for our 2020 events

**April 4:** Petitti's Oakwood Sale

**April 17:** Tuber Auction, Mike Weber, auctioneer

**May 15:** DSO Plant Auction, Mike Weber, auctioneer

**May 15-17:** Holden Arboretum sale

**May 14-16:** Rockefeller Garden sale

**June 19:** Ann Budziak, Rain Gardens, Karl Southerland

**Aug. 1:** Picnic, Mobius Nature Center, Debbie Findlay and Karen Jeric

**Oct. 16:** John Burmeister, Valley City Fungi, Nancy Riopelle

**Nov. 20:** Tony Evangelista, Topic TBD, Photography Contest

**Dec. 5:** Holiday Luncheon, Location TBD, Joann Bendokaitis and Mary Ann Moreno.

## Midwest Spring Meeting and Plant Auction

The Midwest Dahlia Conference Meeting and Plant Auction will be held June 6, starting at 10 a.m., in Elkhart, Indiana. Those planning to stay on Friday night are advised to make a reservation at the Essenhaus Inn ASAP. The Elkhart Dahlia Society will use the proceeds from this sale to help fund the Midwest Show they will sponsor over Labor Day.

# ADS VIRUS PROJECT

**By Tony Evangelista**

Members of the DSO are very aware and supportive of the American Dahlia Society's effort to rid dahlias of disfiguring virus largely because of the leadership of members like Ron Miner, Jim Chuey and Jerry Moreno. The Scheetz-Chuey Foundation will again this year cover half the cost of 30 samples per society. As DSO project leader I have been providing samples for the past several years, which were shown to be virus-free, and my virus-free pot roots are used to make cuttings for our plant sales.

This year the program will again include an option for any member to submit up to 30 samples for a cost of \$10/sample. For more information about this program and how to submit your samples, go to: <https://dahlia.org/wp-content/virusdocs/Testing2020/InstOpen.pdf>. Vendors may also submit samples. ADS Webmaster and member Sharon Swaney has developed a page that shares all the information and links related to this project at: <https://www.dahlia.org/docsinfo/virus-in-dahlia/virus-testing/>.

The primary virus-related issue members need to be focused on at this time of year is cleaning tools while making cuttings. For more information about virus see the page "Virus in Dahlias" on the ADS Website at: [https://www.dahlia.org/docsinfo/virus-in-dahlia/understanding\\_virus\\_in\\_dahlia/](https://www.dahlia.org/docsinfo/virus-in-dahlia/understanding_virus_in_dahlia/).

You may be interested in knowing that Linda Taylor, member of the ADS Virus Committee, reports that she has uploaded her four years worth of sorted and labeled virus testing photos to Flickr at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/141837887@N08/albums>. Her instructions for navigating the site are: "Click on the album you want, and that album will appear, with a header at the top, and big thumbnails of the pictures it contains below it. Click on the first (or any) of those thumbnails to get into the album in slideshow format where you can view the photos one at a time and see their full titles and descriptions (I find I have to scroll down a little to see the description below each photo.) The titles are to identify the sample number, the plant and the photo. The descriptions below are where I put the test results and brief comments like 'parent plant and cutting were planted in different beds but developed same kind of spots' or 'this is how that plant looked the previous year.' Clicking on the picture will get you an enlarged version of it, click again to get back."

## MEET A MEMBER: Mike Weber

For 15 years Mike Weber has been the driving force behind the DSO's project to provide the public with dahlias and in the process supplement the society's treasury. Starting in early March, he works 3 to 4 days a week for several hours on the project at Willoway Nursery in Avon in space kindly donated by owner and member Tom Demaline. He and a group of member volunteers produce hundreds of plants that are sold in May at the Holden Arboretum and Rockefeller Center as well as our May DSO meeting. The project generally raises about \$2,500 per year. That reflects an astonishing level of commitment to our favorite flower.



Propagation begins with placing tubers in soil and getting pot roots going. When eyes grow to 1.5 to 2 inches high, the cutting is taken and placed in a plastic propagating tray, which is then put under a misting system with bottom heat. When the cuttings start showing roots, usually in 9 to 12

days, they are placed into 4 inch pots filled with a good potting mix. They are then set on racks in the greenhouse to harden off for sale. If you would like to help, please let Mike know at a meeting or call him (see directory on page 10).

Mike got hooked on dahlias 35 years ago when his father, who was retired and living in Florida, sent him four tuber clumps purchased from Home Depot. At first he thought they were dead but decided to give them a chance and planted them over his aeration system. As he said, "The rest is history." He has grown up to 175 plants but of late has scaled back to about 125. He especially favors Kenora Wildfire, Pam Howden, and Badger Twinkle. The latter will be Flower of the Year at the national show

DSO hosts in 2021. Mike says what he likes most about growing dahlias is just the “total process”—preparation, growing, grooming and showing. No surprise that digging and storage are his least favorite facets of the hobby.

Mike was born and raised in Elyria, the oldest of seven children. He graduated from Elyria High School and earned a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Bowling Green State University. He met his wife, Marilyn, who also graduated from Bowling Green, at the Lorain County Board of Mentally Retarded and Developmentally Disabled. She was the organization's Director of Residential Services while Mike worked in sales, marketing and as operations manager for three production centers serving 600 to 700 adults with disabilities. He also worked 30 years for Sears part time. This is a man able to multi-task for sure. Mike and Marilyn were married in 1993 at his property in Cripple Creek, CO.



The three production centers Mike oversaw were once called “sheltered workshops,” which provided work experiences for mentally retarded and developmentally disabled adults. Mike was responsible for contracting work into the three production centers. “Job quotes, time studies, and quality control were all components of the job,” he said. These facilities did over a million dollars in sales yearly.

Mike also served as DSO president for three terms—2006-2007, 2008-09, and 2014-15—and finds time for golf, bowling, pickle ball and occasional bike riding. Marilyn cycles on a regular basis and has ridden in the Velasano “Ride for the Cure” to benefit the Cleveland Clinic’s Tausig Cancer Research Center. The last several years she has also ridden in Death Valley twice for Juvenile Diabetes. She is also a skilled photographer and seamstress who has donated a number of her creations for sales at our shows. The society is lucky to have both as active participants.

# JUDGE'S CORNER

By Ron Miner — [baronminer@aol.com](mailto:baronminer@aol.com)

Happy 2020 to you all! It is fun to be in the mode of looking forward to the upcoming 2020 dahlia season with all those wonderful and colorful flowers while the ground is white.

## Join Our DSO Judging Team

The DSO has the great good fortune of having an experienced and capable set of dahlia judges. We benefitted from the wise leadership of Glenn Ruth for many years. His key guidance was to make the judging process an enjoyable one where the objectives were not only to get the best blooms to the head table but also to learn about judging from our colleagues and about how to grow the best dahlias. As a result, we virtually always have a good time in the judging process.

The requirements to become a Candidate Judge are very simple. You need to be a member of the ADS and you need to get a Judging Manual. Then you are eligible to join judging teams at our shows. If you don't

meet either of the above requirements but want to give it a try, let me know at a show and you can listen in on a team's deliberations or serve as a clerk for the team.



An important benefit of becoming a judge is that it is an excellent entre to participating in dahlia shows other than ours. The picture on the left shows part of the final

judging at the Columbus show last fall. The requirements for becoming an Accredited or Senior Judge or for maintaining that judging position are more substantial. They include judging experience and passing written, but open-book, examinations. Those tests serve basically to improve your knowledge of the Judging Manual. (Several of you DSO judges need to complete the judging tests before the start of the season. Please let this note serve as a reminder that you should get those tests completed before the season starts! Now is the time to get that process behind you!)

## Grow Seedlings!

One of the most effective ways to improve your judging skills is to grow seedlings. You will certainly enjoy seeing every one of those totally new flowers in your garden. That is the part I like the best! It is an inspiring privilege! It is also tempting to save tubers from every single one. My experience, however, says that the only practical strategy is to enjoy the heck out of 95% of those new cultivars for the season but then save only the “best” 5%.

Here comes the dilemma: which 5% should you keep? You will almost certainly find some seedlings with wonderful color that you feel that you just must keep. And you will likely have some with perfectly round and symmetrical form that you can't possibly put in the compost. Well, my friends, the answer to the “which-ones-to-keep” question is found on the ADS seedling score sheet. If you will let the score sheet guide your choice of keepers, you are most likely to end up with the seedlings with the greatest probability of success on the show tables and with the cultivars that you will be able to name after your spouse or your kids or your best friends.

The essential first step in ranking your seedlings is to classify them. (That can be a tough step!) Start by reading the “ideal” form definitions found on page 3 of the 2020 Classification and Handbook of Dahlias (CHD). Keep in mind that the definitions describe the summit of each Form “mountain” and that almost all dahlias are at some “elevation” short of the summit. Your objective is to find which peak your new seedling falls closest to.

With the classification in hand, you can then walk through the judging criteria and develop a working score for each seedling. It is particularly useful to experience the discipline of rating each of the various characteristics among the seedlings. For example, I developed a clear standard for what it takes to get a score of 15 for Substance. I recommend using a spreadsheet so the comparisons across the attributes are most obvious. Pretend that the three seedlings pictured below are in your dahlia patch and you need to decide which two to keep!



## New Way to Sign Up for Refreshments

Pat Sadataki, our refreshments chair, would like to modernize the method for refreshment sign-up by using the App "SignUp Genius." Members willing to bring a refreshment are asked to go to this link and sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0f44aead29a2ff2-dahlia>. The App allows you to sign up for one meeting or for the whole year if you like! You can also see who else has signed up and what they plan to bring. Pat will also send a reminder email before each meeting to give you the link again. If you have any question e-mail Pat at: sadataki@aol.com. Or if you are not online, you may call her at the number listed below.

## 2020 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 . . . . . 330-562-3298  
**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;  
Karl Southerland, June; Debbie Findlay and Karen Jeric,  
August Picnic; Nancy Riopelle, October; Tony Evangelista,  
November; Joann Bendokaitis and MaryAnn Moreno,  
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**

- 2020 dues may be paid anytime now using form on page 11.
- Visit the DSO website at: [www.dahliasocietyofohio.org](http://www.dahliasocietyofohio.org).
- Follow the DSO Facebook Page at: <https://www.facebook.com/>