DAHLIA DIGEST
DAHLIA SOCIETY OF OHIO
Since 1930

VOL. 2008 ISSUE 3

April, 2008

April 18 MEETING
7:30 p.m.
Busch Community Room
7501 Ridge Road, Parma
Just south of Pleasant Valley Road

PROGRAM

ANNUAL TUBER AUCTION
Hi Folks,

Well, it looks like we’re finally over the hump with our weather “situation.” Hopefully, it’s full speed ahead for our upcoming dahlia season.

With the warmer weather, dahlia tubers should also be showing some life. Check for growth on your tubers and bring any extra ones you may have to our April meeting and tuber auction. Please make sure they’re all properly marked and identified.

Don’t forget that the “flower of the year” for 2008 is Kenora Wildfire. If you have any extra tubers of this variety, please bring them to the April meeting and share them with fellow growers. Along that line, super thanks to Jim Chuey and Randy & Kathy Foith for donating a generous quantity of “Wildfire” tubers. We’ve put some at Willoway Nursery to propagate and hopefully with a little help from Mother Nature, we’ll have some plants available for our May meeting.

We did our first cuttings at Willoway on 4/9, approximately 25 plants are now potted. More on the way. Don’t forget we can always use volunteers for our sales in May at Holden Arboretum (May 2-4) and Rockefeller Gardens (May 16-18). Please give this some thought and sign up at April’s meeting.

That’s it for now. See you at April’s meeting and sale.

Mike
OFFICERS-CHAIRS/PHONE NUMBERS
MIKE WEBER, President…………………………440-647-3162
BARBARA HOSTA, First Vice President……216-524-2635
DAVE CAP, Second Vice President……………440-888-5589
JOANN BENDOKAITIS, Treasurer……………440-543-4515
YOUR NAME?, Recording Secretary…………??-??-???
MARYANN MORENO, Corresponding Secretary…
…………………………………………………………440-543-5658
JOHN BENDOKAITIS, Membership Chair…..440-543-4515
BARBARA HOSTA, Digest Co-Editor…………216-524-2635
…………………………………………………………e-mail: bxh5@po.cwru.edu
JERRY MORENO, Digest Co-Editor……………440-543-5658
e-mail: maryannjerry@alltel.net or moreno@jcu.edu
KATIE JANDA, Sunshine Chair…………………440-285-2385
JERRY MORENO, ADS Representative……440-543-5658

PROGRAMS for 2008
Refreshments for April:
Sharon and Rob Swaney,
Elaine Bebenroth, Barb Kahn
Feb 15 DVD’s on New Introductions and more
March 21 A program on Soil Testing
April 18 DSO Annual Tuber Auction
May 16 DSO Annual Plant/Tuber Auction
June 20 Container Gardening with Dahlias
July Picnic…site to be determined
August Bus Trip to Local Dahlia Gardens and the
MVDS Trial Garden, Fellows Riverside Garden
October 17 Digging, Storing, Dividing
November 21Photo Contest
December 5 Holiday Dinner Meeting……FIRST Friday
SHOW SCHEDULE for 2008

Cuyahoga County Fair          Aug 9
Mahoning Valley Show          Aug 23,24
Geauga County Fair            Aug 29 setup
DSO 78th Annual               Sept 6-7
Midwest Show Cincinnati/Columbus Sept 12-14

TUBER/PLANT SALES for 2008

**PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO HELP**

Pettiti’s Oakwood       April 12
Pettiti’s Avon Lake     April 13
DSO Annual Tuber        April 18
Holden Arboretum        May 2-4
Rockefeller Gardens     May 16-18
DSO Annual Plant        May 16
Your Dahlia TO DO Checklist:

• Check your stored tubers—if lots have turned to mush, then wait patiently for DSO’s tuber and plant sales on April 18 and May 16, or if you have ants in your pants — Check out www.dahlias.net/dbiglist.htm for suppliers.

• Attend DSO meetings and ask questions. We have many expert growers who are more than willing to share their expertise.

• Get involved in one or more DSO activities this year, e.g., assist at one of our sales, help setup a show, become a clerk at a show or better yet, become an apprentice judge. It really is a lot of fun and you learn a lot about growing better dahlias!

• Share your dahlia blooms with friends or shut-ins or take a vase to the local post office, your doctor’s office, especially dentist’s office. See Hank Doll’s survey in last month’s Digest.
78th Annual DSO Show Annual Show
Flower of the Year
KENORA WILDFIRE
A SemiCactus Red

If you don’t have one, we will try to have some available at our DSO Plant Sale meeting May 16. For those of you who have an extra tuber, please bring it to the April meeting to help us take cuttings for May.
75th Annual Midwest Show

Sponsored by the Cincinnati and Columbus Dahlia Societies

There will be a special class of Luther Havens originations as a memorial honor.

Minerva Magic, Minerva Sunrise, and Luther come to mind.

Minerva Magic
B LC W

Minerva Sunrise
B IC DB
RD/Y
The JUDGE’s Corner
Ron Miner  baronminer@aol.com

By the time you receive this, the process will be underway! Starting tubers, taking cuttings, getting the garden ready – don’t forget that soil test you were going to do last year – and dreaming about those perfect blooms that we will soon be enjoying. What an exciting time of the year this is - with the whole season ahead of us.

But perhaps you hesitated a moment when you read “perfect” in the previous paragraph. After all, what is perfect? To most of our friends and families, perfect means you shared one of those perfectly beautiful flowers with them. However, if you are a judge, your expectations are a bit higher. You know that show entries have a whole range of perfection from those perfectly beautiful flowers for the kitchen table to the bloom that captures best in show. Perhaps if you are not a judge, you are curious about how we choose the bloom that captures best in show. If so, please buy a judging manual at the next DSO meeting and do a little bedtime reading! Plan on joining our judging seminars this summer. If you are a member of ADS, you can become an official Candidate Judge just by showing an interest and doing a little homework.

Color, spectacular color, is one of the attributes that best qualifies our dahlias as “perfectly beautiful” to our friends and families. What color qualities qualify them as “perfect” to the judge picking the best in show? Check “color” in the index in the judging manual; take a look at the color definitions in the Classification and
Handbook of Dahlias. You will find lots of information on color and the quality of the color.

Let’s zero in on a specific example. Variegated blooms are among those most admired by friends and neighbors. Those observers are often most enthused about the most striking color combinations. I remember a bloom, half red and half white, that was the prettiest flower in my garden according to one admirer. (I’ve ordered a pom cultivar for the garden this year that is supposed to be that way!) At the other end of the spectrum, the British can be so concerned about uniformity that variegated entries are virtually unknown in shows there. The variegation would not be perfectly uniform and the entry simply couldn’t win there. Judges here look for a sharp and distinct separation of the colors in the entry. They look for a uniform distribution and a fine distribution of the colors. (Do not, however, expect the second color to be in exactly the same spot on each floret!) One or more florets that are a single color, without variegation, however, would be a serious fault. The second color should also comprise a substantial portion of the florets.

Your American Dahlia Society is becoming more sensitive to the average grower’s enthusiasm for wild colors and forms that would not be likely to make it to the best in show spot – at least for a while. In the meantime, I will try to keep you posted on what judges use to determine what does make it to that spot! Come join one of our judging seminars this summer; I guarantee you will enjoy it!
Dahlia Do’s and Don’ts for Beginners

Installment 3: Early Season Care Before Blooms

Based on material from Richard Parshall.

Last month the topic was on spring garden preparation, tilling, and where, when, and how to plant. This month’s is on early season care before blooms.

DO Protect tubers and plants from a late frost. In northeast Ohio, the last spring frost is as early as May 15 and as late as May 31.

DO Protect plants against slugs and snails by baiting or by killing with, say, a spray solution of 1 part ammonia to 1 part water. There are many home remedies to rid the garden of slugs from grape juice, vinegar or ammonia to beer and oat bran. See more than you really want to know at www.thegardenhelper.com/slugs.html or Digest Vol 2007 Issue 5.

DON’T cultivate heavily with a hoe or tiller at any time. Dahlias are surface feeders and their root systems will be damaged.

DO tie your plants to their stake as they grow. Laterals can break off in a heavy wind or rain.
DON’T let your dahlia plants grow unchecked and gangly.

DO top or pinch the growing tip of all large flowering (4 inch bloom or larger) dahlias after they have developed three to five sets of leaves. This produces more early flowers and a compact bush.

DON’T water very much until blooming unless the weather is very dry. Then soak ground every 10 days if needed.

DO fertilize when plants are 6 inches to a foot tall. What to use depends on your soil. Hopefully you have already done a soil test and therefore know what your soil needs. Otherwise, try a 12-12-12 a couple times a season.

DO apply a two to four-inch layer of mulch (compost, straw, grass clipping) around the end of June to prevent weeds and to keep moisture levels high.

DO Come to the April meeting to buy some great dahlia tubers at reasonable prices.

Next month: Summer Care—In Bloom

Jerry Moreno
RECENT CROSSWORD PUZZLES

DAHLIA SIGHTINGS:

40 down: **Flower named for a Swedish botanist**

6 across: **The national flower of Mexico**

15 across **Bright-colored blooms**

52 across: **spectacular garden flower**

DID YOU KNOW?

The Aztecs gathered and cultivated the dahlia for food, ceremony, as well as decorative purposes, and the long woody stem of one variety was used for small pipes.

The dahlia is named after Swedish 18th-century botanist Anders Dahl.

The great varieties of dahlias result from their being *octoploids*, i.e., they have eight sets of homologous chromosomes, whereas most plants have only two. (Homework: Get a free tuber at the April DSO meeting if you can explain in plain English what the heck that means!)
NOTES FROM ADS

• MENTOR HONOR ROLL
  Look back to the beginning of your interest in dahlias, and you will remember someone who encouraged you to change from a backyard gardener to a dahlia grower. To honor these generous dahlia friends, the ADS has approved the establishment of a “Mentor Honor Roll.” Mac Boyer has agreed to compile the list of names for the Honor Roll, which will be published in the September issue of the ADS Bulletin. Send your designations to him by July 15, 2008. Suggested donation is $25 (tax deductible) per name submitted.
  Mac Boyer 16816 County Road 10, Bristol IN 46507

• CONGRATULATIONS JOHN!
  Congratulations to DSO member John Learner whose photograph “Jessie G’s Smiling Face” placed third in a recent ADS Photo Contest. His class was digital dark room in which he placed a picture of the face of his beautiful daughter, Jessie, in the center of a beautiful Jessie G bloom. See ADS March Bulletin.
SPECIAL NOTICE FOR MEMBERSHIPS
From John Bendokaitis

Please check the mailing label on this digest for one of these statements:

DUES ARE DUE or DUES ARE PAID

Please let me know if there is an error in my records.

MAIL FORM on NEXT PAGE and PAYMENT TO:
DSO MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN
JOHN R. BENDOKAITIS
17182 EASTVIEW DR
CHAGRIN FALLS, OHIO 44023

NOTE!!
If you are not a member of the American Dahlia Society, consider joining NOW. It is truly worth it!
Why? What are the benefits?

• You will get the CLASSIFICATION HANDBOOK
• You will get the colorful and informative ADS BULLETIN
• You will also receive the AMERICAN DAHLIA GUIDE TO GROWING AND CARING FOR DAHLIAS.
• You will be entitled to vote in election of ADS officers, and all other privileges of membership.
CHECK YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS ON THE OTHER SIDE
SUBMIT ANY CHANGES BELOW

TO MAKE RENEWAL EASIER, SIMPLY TEAR OFF
THIS PAGE, INITIAL AND MAIL WITH YOUR
CHECK TO JOHN BENDOKAITIS

PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO
DAHLIA SOCIETY OF OHIO

DATE______________________________

NAME___________________________________________________

CHANGES___________________________________________________

EMAIL____________________________________________________

PLEASE CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS. Place an X in [ ].

[   ] DSO Membership (includes husband and wife) ………..$10.00
[   ] DSO with ADS MEMBERSHIP (for one person only)..$30.00
[   ] DSO with ADS FAMILY Membership…………………..$33.00
[   ] DSO with ADS STUDENT Membership………………..$15.00
   (18 YRS OLD OR YOUNGER)

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS:
[   ] ADS First Class Mailing for December   ADD $ 3.00 TO ABOVE

[   ] DSO with ADS SNOWBIRD OPTION—INDIVIDUAL $38.00##
[   ] DSO with ADS SNOWBIRD OPTION—FAMILY…… $41.00##

## INCLUDE WINTER ADDRESS FOR SNOW BIRD MAILING__________________________________________
DAHLIA SOCIETY of OHIO
MaryAnn Moreno
8232 Westhill Drive
Chagrin Falls, OH 44023