

DAHLIA DIGEST

DAHLIA SOCIETY OF OHIO

Since 1930

VOL. 2008 ISSUE 4

May, 2008



May 16 MEETING

7:30 p.m.

Busch Community Room

7501 Ridge Road, Parma

Just south of Pleasant Valley Road



PROGRAM

ANNUAL

PLANT AUCTION

President's Notes

Hi Folks,

Well it looks like the long winter is finally over and the day we've all been waiting for—planting day, will soon be upon us. With the ground temperature warming, remembering we need about a 60 degree temperature, our tubers should soon be finding a permanent home.

For those of you still looking for tubers, don't forget our tuber/plant sale at our May 16th meeting. We should have some tubers, potted tubers, and plants. If you can't make Friday's meeting, we'll be selling all of the above at our sale that weekend at Rockefeller Gardens and Greenhouse. May 16th-18th, (10:00am-4pm). If you're interested in making some purchases of all kinds of plants there, we could always use some help those 3 days so give some thought to volunteering.

Speaking of volunteering, I'd like to thank all those who volunteered their time and donated tubers to another successful sale at Holden Arboretum the weekend of May 2nd-4th. It's this type of help that makes our society what it is today.

That's if for now, enjoy the good weather, get your planting beds ready and we'll see you at our May meeting.

Mike



**VISIT OUR DSO WEBSITE
SHARON SWANEY, WEBMASTER
WWW.DAHLIASOCIETYOFOHIO.ORG**

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PROGRAMS for 2008

Refreshments for May:

Barbara Hosta, Marilyn Weber

plus anyone who would like to bring something.

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 12 Picnic...Cindie Matusicky Details coming
August Bus Trip to Local Dahlia Gardens and the
MVDS Trial Garden, Fellows Riverside Garden
October 17 Digging, Storing, Dividing
November 21 Photo 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
DSO 78th Annual	Sept 6-7
Midwest Show Cincinnati/Columbus	Sept 12-14
ADS National Show Philadelphia	Sept 18-22

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 for
the May meeting:**

- Be sure to attend the May plant auction sale and don't forget to bring containers (trays, boxes.,,,) to carry home your prize-winning dahlia plant purchases.
- Please help to sell plants at the Rockefeller Greenhouse May 16-18. Note that there is no food or drink available on site so you will need to bring your own. Call Dave Cap 440-888-5589 if you have any questions. Thanks for your help. By the way, other vendors will be there selling plants of all sorts at very reasonable prices. Or simply stop by and visit. It's a real gem! The greenhouse and gardens are beautiful and interesting.
- Introduce yourself to Ron Miner at the May meeting and let him know that you are really looking forward to becoming a dahlia judge! He'll be thrilled, and so will you!



Thanks from Dave Cap—



Our tuber sales at Pettiti's Oakwood and Avon Lake, and at Holden were very successful. Let's hope that Rockefeller will be too. Thanks to all who donated tubers and/or their time to help: Brant Giere, Carol Sahley, John and Joann Bendokaitis, Stan and Linda Vuletich, Chuck and Marge Janki, Sharon and Rob Swaney, Mike and Marilyn Weber, Jerry and MaryAnn Moreno, Barbara Kahn, Hank Doll, Ric and Donna Mattmuller, Ed and Janet Flaws, Randy and Kathy Foith, Elaine and Wes Bebenroth, Barbara Hosta, Greg Blank. Did I forget anyone? Please let me know.

We cleared around a thousand dollars overall even after having given Holden their 20%. But more importantly, over 300 tubers will be in gardens throughout northeast Ohio making people happy and marvel at the blooms that they will produce. It's really nice to hear about people's success at growing the dahlia and to answer their questions. That's the real purpose of our putting on the various sales—to promote the dahlia as best we can. What's really neat is that there is an increasing number of return buyers from our past sales. Some buy three or four, enjoy them, and then treat them as annuals seeking us out the following year to buy three or four again. As an example, at Holden a fella came by and we asked if he grew dahlias. He said "I used to, but gave up because they were too much trouble to dig up and store." Our reply was for \$3 a tuber, get three or four, think of how much more beautiful your garden will be, and then let them go and come back next year. He thought that was a great idea and bought three!

75th Annual Midwest Show

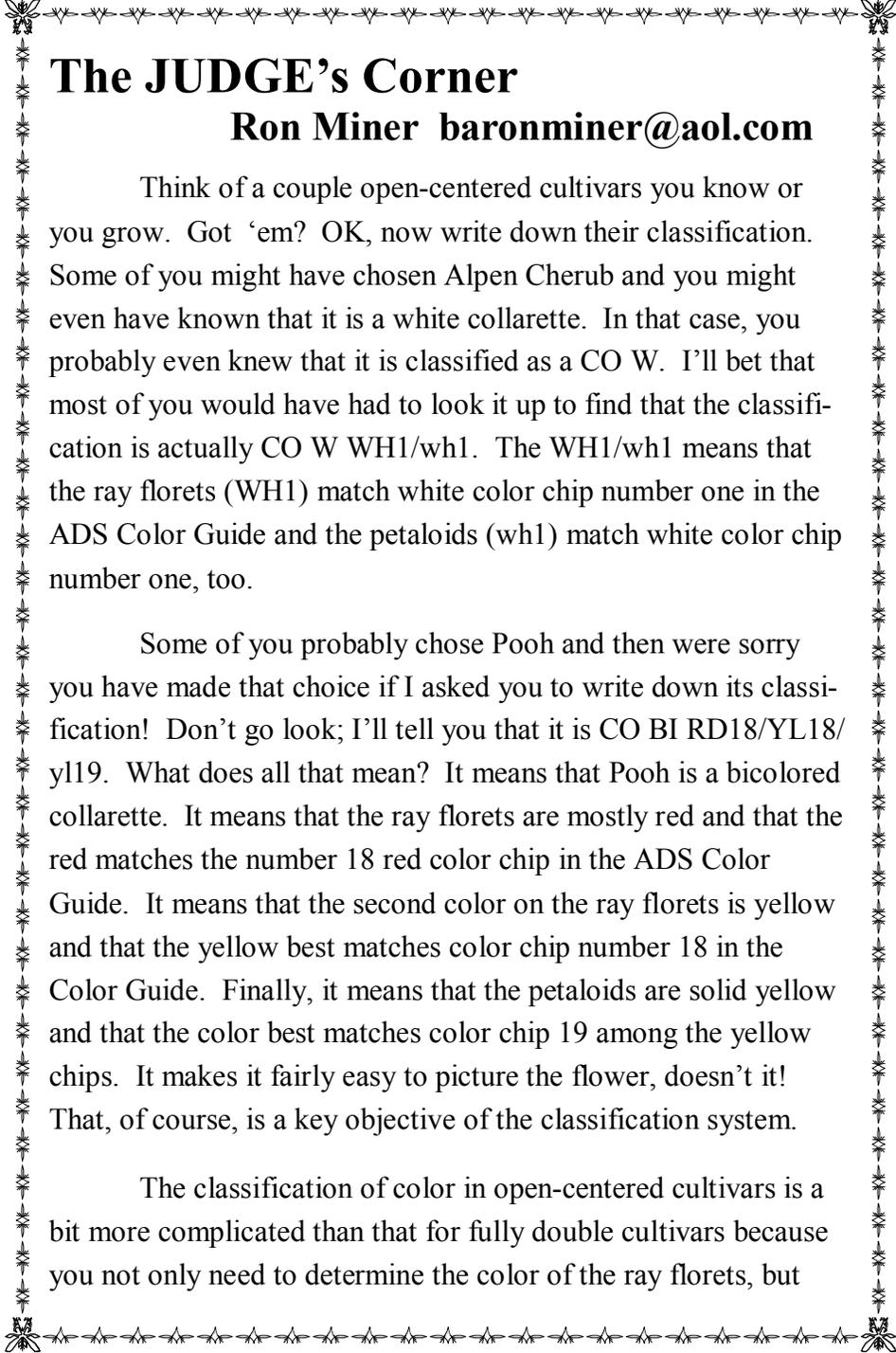
Keep in mind that the Midwest show is the week after ours and is featuring a special Court entry for a Luther Havens original in his memory. Most of Luther's blooms start with *Minerva*. However, others are *Dick Westfall*, *Luther*, *Norma Wills*, *Wills*, and *Wilbur Seipel*. There is a \$200 prize for the best Haven bloom. The Midwest show is co-sponsored by the Cincinnati and Columbus societies this year.



DSO Flower of the Year



Also, don't forget that **Kenora Wildfire** is our DSO bloom choice for 2008. A special Court of Honor category is reserved for the best Wildfire at our 78th annual show this September. A few plants are for sale at the May meeting.



The JUDGE's Corner

Ron Miner baronminer@aol.com

Think of a couple open-centered cultivars you know or you grow. Got 'em? OK, now write down their classification. Some of you might have chosen Alpen Cherub and you might even have known that it is a white collarette. In that case, you probably even knew that it is classified as a CO W. I'll bet that most of you would have had to look it up to find that the classification is actually CO W WH1/wh1. The WH1/wh1 means that the ray florets (WH1) match white color chip number one in the ADS Color Guide and the petaloids (wh1) match white color chip number one, too.

Some of you probably chose Pooh and then were sorry you have made that choice if I asked you to write down its classification! Don't go look; I'll tell you that it is CO BI RD18/YL18/yl19. What does all that mean? It means that Pooh is a bicolored collarette. It means that the ray florets are mostly red and that the red matches the number 18 red color chip in the ADS Color Guide. It means that the second color on the ray florets is yellow and that the yellow best matches color chip number 18 in the Color Guide. Finally, it means that the petaloids are solid yellow and that the color best matches color chip 19 among the yellow chips. It makes it fairly easy to picture the flower, doesn't it! That, of course, is a key objective of the classification system.

The classification of color in open-centered cultivars is a bit more complicated than that for fully double cultivars because you not only need to determine the color of the ray florets, but

also the color of the petaloids (CO) or the dome (PE) or both the reverse and the face of the florets (O) or the eye zone, if it is apparent (S, MS). The colors of the ray florets are shown in capital letters and the colors of the petaloids, domes, etc. are shown in lower case letters.

All right, now that you have all of that straight, let's have a quiz (well, not exactly!). How would you describe a cultivar classified as O DP18/ db wh3/dp14? Well, it is an orchid, right? What is the color of the back of the ray florets? If you said DP 18, you are right! If you said db, you forgot that the orchids are classified on the basis of the color of the backs of their florets – because that is the portion of the floret that you see when the ray florets are involute for at least two-thirds of their length and fully involute for at least one third their length! Ok, what are the colors of the little bit of the front of the ray florets that you do see near the disc florets? No doubt you said a dark blend of white and purple and you are right. Does that flower sound familiar? It is, of course, another one of our favorite open-centered cultivars – Lupin Sheila.



Unless you are classifying seedlings, you really don't have to carry all of that information around in your head. On the other hand, it is important that you are able to translate that jargon when you are judging open-centered classes so you can see whether or not a cultivar is in the right class and the extent to which its color matches its classification!

Dahlia Do's and Don'ts for Beginners

Installment 4: Summer Care—In Bloom

Based on material from Richard Parshall.

Last month the topic was on Early Season Care Before Blooms. This month's is on things to do once the tubers or plants are in the ground and growing.

DO disbud your blooms by removing the two side buds at each budding tip. This will encourage growth and control plant size.

DON'T let all the blooms develop without disbudding. Flowers will be weaker with shorter stems.

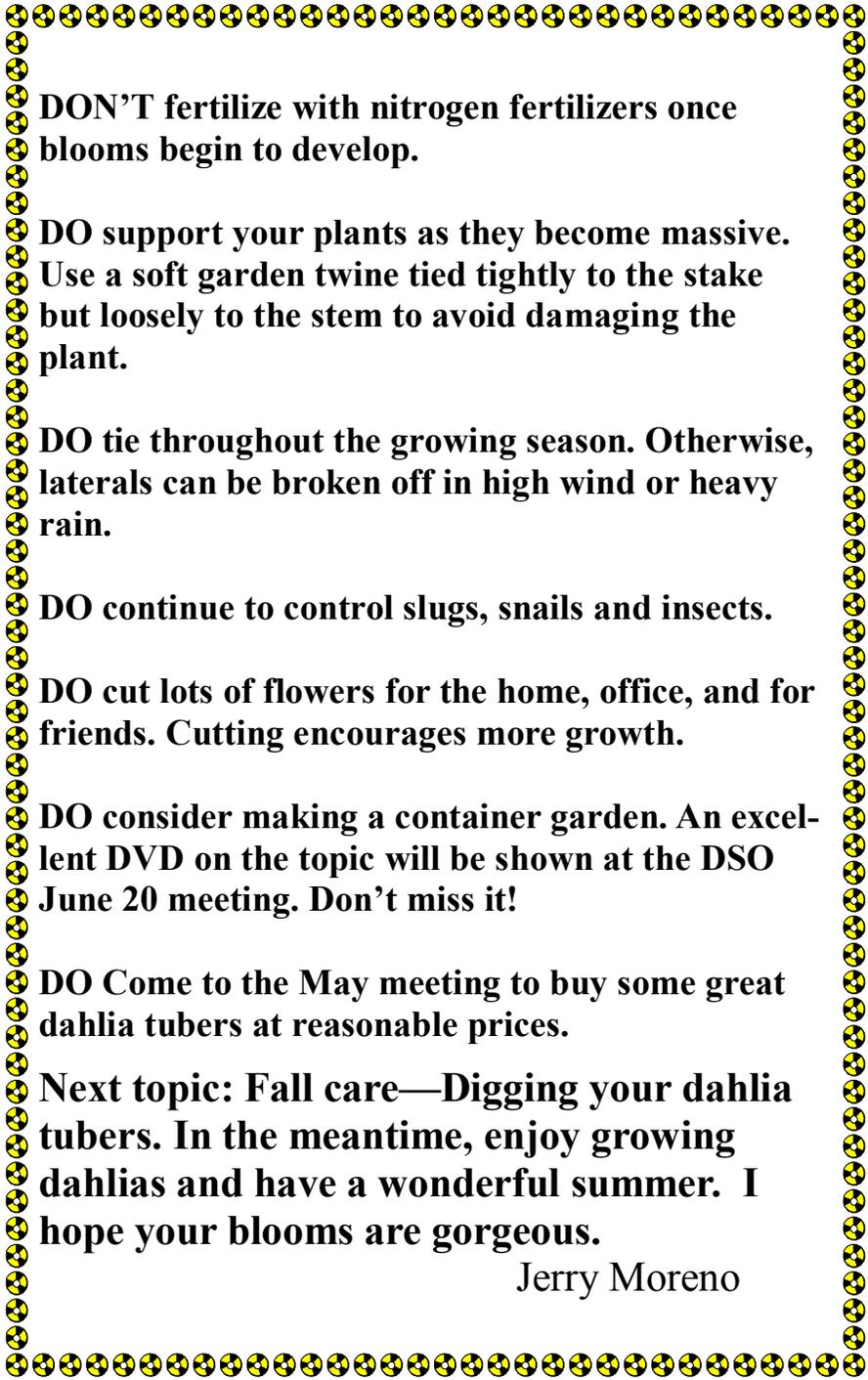
DO deadhead (remove) old or spent blooms.

DO water deeply every four or five days as the season starts to get hot, but not before.

DON'T water lightly.

DO fertilize with a low or no nitrogen fertilizer (0-20-20) to encourage flower and tuber development when plants are a foot tall. (Note: 0-20-20 is Richard Parshall's recommendation. Other growers spread a handful of 5-10-10 around each plant, water in thoroughly and repeat around August 1.)





DON'T fertilize with nitrogen fertilizers once blooms begin to develop.

DO support your plants as they become massive. Use a soft garden twine tied tightly to the stake but loosely to the stem to avoid damaging the plant.

DO tie throughout the growing season. Otherwise, laterals can be broken off in high wind or heavy rain.

DO continue to control slugs, snails and insects.

DO cut lots of flowers for the home, office, and for friends. Cutting encourages more growth.

DO consider making a container garden. An excellent DVD on the topic will be shown at the DSO June 20 meeting. Don't miss it!

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

Next topic: Fall care—Digging your dahlia tubers. In the meantime, enjoy growing dahlias and have a wonderful summer. I hope your blooms are gorgeous.

Jerry Moreno

THE FOITH FIGHT WITH VOLES!

Randy and Kathy Foith

Our dahlia garden was looking very nice in early June last year. The plants were growing, green and healthy. Then we started to notice that some of the very best plants were wilting and dying. Thinking that the tubers were rotting, we dug them up, only to find that the tuber, roots, and/or plant had been eaten. It didn't take us very long to identify the culprits—VOLES!

Voles are small mice that tunnel or follow the tunnels of moles and chipmunks. The moles burrow through the soil looking for worms and grubs. They don't eat vegetation. The voles follow these tunnels eating any succulent roots they can find. No roots, no plants!

Our first experience with these critters began about five years ago when our hostas refused to flourish in the spring. Upon digging them, we found very few roots. But voles never had bothered the dahlias before. To try and correct the situation we sprinkled dry castor and sprayed a mixture of castor oil and fish emulsion (fertilizer) over the entire garden. Also, we dropped rat poison into all the rodent tunnels that we could see. After two weeks, the losses diminished!

But this will probably turn out to be an ongoing battle. If you have had experience with voles, please let us know. Thanks.



DAHLIA LOOKOUT

Jerry Moreno

- **If you have an extra Dr. Arnett, please bring it to the May meeting or give Jerry Moreno a call. Day 216-397-4681.**
- **Does anyone know a dahlia by the name of Norma Jean? I received an email from Norma Scalf who writes “My grandfather Elmer Shepard resided in Cincinnati and developed the “Norma Jean” dahlia. I have recently obtained a magazine (the December 1947 *Flower Grower*), a newspaper article (from the *Cincinnati Times Star*), as well as my grandfather’s 1948 catalog from Shepard’s Dahlia Gardens outlining his success with this flower. He won the ADS Derrill Hart Memorial Medal which I have. I would love to find the plant or root stock for “Norma Jean” and wonder if you could guide me in my search. Thank you. Norma Scalf” If any of you could help, please let me know and I will get you in touch with Norma. Thanks.**
- **Thanks to Mike Weber and Rob Swaney for donating 25 tubers for the Aurora Leighton Elementary School “Dahlia Circle” which is located in the garden area behind their school. The Circle is beautiful as kids return to school in September and their parents marvel at them on parent-teacher visits.**



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From John Bendokaitis**

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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.**



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