

DAHLIA DIGEST

DAHLIA SOCIETY OF OHIO

Since 1930

VOL. 2010 ISSUE 7
November 2010



Friday, November 19 Meeting

7:30 p.m.

Busch Community Room

7501 Ridge Road, Parma

Just south of Pleasant Valley Road



PROGRAM

- **Neil Evans**
- **Ron Meloon**
- **PHOTO CONTEST**



President's Notes

Hi Gang,

I know that some of us have our 600 dahlia plants dug, divided, stored and are basking on Floridian shores already, whereas others of us are barely thinking about cutting down our plants. In which group are you, or are you somewhere in between? As I write this column, the weather is beautiful so I better get my dahlias taken care of before Indian summer is over. Had a delightful visit today with a Rocky River gardener named Bonnie who called me and donated her 12 dahlia plants to DSO if I would dig them up. I did! She really enjoys the dahlia but wanted some new varieties. Thank you Bonnie!

Thinking of what to give that dahlia gardener friend of yours for a holiday gift? How about membership in the American Dahlia Society! The ADS Bulletin has terrific articles; reading the advertisers' new varieties is worth it all by itself! Also, please get your DSO dues paid by the end of December. John will be very thankful indeed if you do.

DSO's November meeting is traditionally on photography. Sharon has an interesting twist to it this year. Come and join us, Friday the 19th. I wonder if we will need special glasses?

Thanks to Barbara Hosta, Mike Weber, and Sharon Swaney for November's refreshments!

Jerry



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

November Program Presenters

- Neil Evans on Midwest Show

and

- Professional photographer
Ron Meloon
On taking 3-D photographs!

This program will be chock full of fun, information, and wonderment. I think I can al- tee some oohs and ahs. The meeting will in- clude our an- nual photogra- phy contest (details on the next page); Neil Evans will regale us with his pictures of the Midwest Show; and, Ron Meloon, guest professional photographer, will provide a 3-D retrospective on the Midwest show. If you loved your Viewmaster as a child, don't miss this! The pictures are truly amazing.



Sharon

Halloween Special!

John Learner's final harvesting of blooms from his garden happened to coincide with Halloween. His Trick-or-Treaters were treated to a dahlia bloom to go along with the candy. Imagine the enthusiasm with which their parents greeted that surprise!



Photo Contest 2010 Rules

Enter your original photographs
in one of three categories.

- **Single Dahlia** - Close-ups of a single dahlia, not computer enhanced.
- **Dahlias with people, animals, or other dahlias.** This includes pictures of containers, gardens, bouquets. No computer enhancement.
- **Artsy** - Pictures of dahlias with unusual perspectives, using filters, special lenses, etc. Computer enhancement ok and encouraged.

Please keep pictures 8x10 or smaller, preferably not matted. Good luck!!

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DSO Holiday Gathering
Saturday, December 4, 2010 – 1 PM to 4 PM

Dimitri'S Restaurant
Midtown Plaza Shopping Center
1830 Snow Road
Parma, OH 44130
(216) 741-3399



Dimitri's offers a wide variety of foods. We will chose from the menu and have individual checks. Entree prices \$9-\$15. The checks will automatically include gratuities. Dinners include fresh baked rolls and salad or soup. Full bar and wine selections are available.

Please RSVP by November 30 to Sharon, e-mail 1stVP@dahliasocietyofohio.org or phone (330) 562-3296.

The JUDGE's Corner

Ron Miner - baronminer@aol.com

I always have mixed emotions at the end of the season. It is pretty nice to be able just to harvest blooms as you wish without worrying about a pending show. The fall also usually brings out the best in my dahlia garden, including those first year seedlings that have been slow to bloom. On the other hand, all that digging and dividing can get old pretty quickly when the weather doesn't cooperate. In addition, spring is a long way away; how will we get our dahlia 'fix?' I have just the right answer for that one!

Get out that Guide to Judging Dahlias and set it next to the lounge chair or on the coffee table so that you can easily grab it every time you need some dahlia 'talk.' I sent our current DSO judges some information including a take-home test regarding the work we need to do this winter to maintain our accreditation. (If you didn't get it and/or you aren't on the DSO judge's list and would like to be, please email me as soon as possible!) Print the test that was included and set it next to the Manual. As I see it, much of the test is designed just to make sure you read the manual. You will need to spend some time working on the test this winter! Please let me know if you have any questions about the requalification process.

It is probably a good time to step back to review some of the basics of judging dahlias. One important issue is your attitude, or mindset, as you judge either by yourself or as part of a team. First, you need to be conscious of your own preferences and prejudices. We all like (or dislike!) some colors or forms more than others. If you are aware of your prejudices, you can ask yourself whether or not your prejudice is influencing your decision. If you are uncomfortable with your ability to 'neutralize' your prejudice,



you could rely more heavily on your teammates in the decision. I sometimes feel that I overcompensate for my prejudices and that, of course, is just as bad as favoring your prejudices. This is another good example of the positives of a team judging approach.

In a team judging environment, it is important that you not only listen to your teammates, but that you also hear their views. That is, do not use the time they are speaking to think about your own perspective; you need to hear (and respect) their inputs. You need to encourage the inputs of others on the team, particularly those with less experience and less self-confidence than you. You also need to steer the discussion toward principles and conclusions based on knowledge gleaned from the ADS basic judging tools: the Guide to Judging Dahlias, the Classification and Handbook of Dahlias, and the Seedling Score Sheet. A corollary to that is you need to argue your perspectives in the context of your knowledge of those publications. Thus, it is ok, even appropriate, to refer to the judging manual during the discussion, for example, if there is an unresolved difference of opinion. Once a consensus decision is achieved, it is important that you adopt that majority view and not continue to adhere to a minority opinion.



Finally, remember the sage counsel of our favorite mentor, Glenn Ruth, to have a good time and to learn something each time you judge!

Please take a look at the following table and make sure to identify what you need to do next summer to meet these requirements and those in the materials I sent you. We will probably need to schedule some 'extra' seedling judging sessions so that everyone can meet the requirements. Please also get to work on those judge's tests and get them to me as soon as possible so that they are complete before next summer! Thanks!

**Basic Requirements for Maintaining
AC and SR Judging Status**

1. Continue as an ADS member and show and judge at least four out of the preceding five years.
2. Judge in at least 8 ADS shows over those five years.
3. Judge at least 10 seedlings (Seedling Bench, Trial Garden, or special arrangement) over the five years
4. Attend a judging seminar at least every other year.
5. Complete the appropriate judge's test.
6. SR judges must also be prepared to judge in any class assigned them.

Don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Ron

Winterizing Your Garden

You've got one more gardening task you should really take on – winterizing your beds so they'll be in good condition for spring planting. (The bonus: Doing this now – and properly – will help minimize having too many weeds, grubs and other varmints in your face when it warms up again in a few months.)

So here are some final tips for getting your planting beds ready for their winter hibernation:

- Turn the soil. You can use a rototiller if you wish, but the old-time method is just as good – and the way your grandparents did it – with a sturdy garden fork. Dig down at least 12 inches and break up those clods into tillable soil.
- Dig up the big roots and refuse from summer's harvest and discard the waste. Get rid of large hunks of leftover everything! (Smaller organic stuff may be left as compost.)
- Smooth the surface evenly with a rake. Give your bed the appearance of a brand-new garden ready for planting.
- Apply mulch to prevent erosion over the winter. Mulch, in addition to being attractive, suppresses weeds and retains moisture in the soil – particularly beneficial over a dry winter.

Those four steps will give you an aerated soil, one that holds ample moisture, yet drains well, and doesn't "sour" during the winter.

Now, some folks prefer a winter planting, like cold crops, onions, other edibles, or even a "cover" crop that holds the soil or

restores natural nutrients to the earth – a sort of “green manure.” Annual winter grasses such as rye are sometimes used for this purpose. Just remember that whatever you sow, you reap; many grasses are prolific seeders, so you may have a grass crop for years – whether you want it or not.

White grubs and other soil-borne critters overwinter in well-managed beds, so you might also consider applying an appropriate insecticide now, as these guys will double in size (and appetite!) by spring. Check with your local garden center professional for advice on which product is best for your situation (and as always, follow all label instructions carefully).

Finally, you need to decide whether you want to apply a pre-emergent herbicide to control winter and spring weeds. If you’re considering spring planting by seed (zinnias, for example) or using an annual that returns loyally (like cosmos), then forget the pre-emergent. If, however, you plan to use garden species that you don’t want to return from their prolific seeding (such as hybrid marigolds), then perhaps you might consider herbicide treatment. Remember, some pre-emergent herbicides remain in the soil for several years, so make a wise decision. Again, ask your garden center professional what product is best for you and your gardening needs.

So check off that final “to-do” on your list. Done? Okay – now you can go dormant along with your plants!

For more information see David Morgan’s article at www.learn2grow.com/gardeningguides/seasonalgardening/fall/WinterizeYourBeds.aspx

Join DSO for \$10

Join DSO and ADS for \$30 (single)

Join DSO and ADS for \$33 (family)

Send name, address, email address and check made out to DSO to:

John Bendokaitis
17182 Eastview Drive
Chagrin Falls OH 44023



If you aren't a member of the American Dahlia Society, please give it some serious thought. The ADS Bulletin publication comes out four times a year. It contains excellent information

The June issue contained many interesting articles: Cut flower vase life improvement project; super fertilizers; compost tea; dahlia culture; average time for buds to open; dahlia fertility research report; composting with coffee; an article on the Weeping Tree Dahlia, a recently discovered tree dahlia from Oaxaca, Mexico; and as they say, much, much more including what dahlias nurseries have available.



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