Friday, March 21 Meeting
7:30 p.m.
Busch Community Room
7501 Ridge Road, Parma
Just south of Pleasant Valley Road

PROGRAM:
- Ron Zayac…Canterbury Creek Gardens
  Living Soil and Organic Fertilizer
- Dave Cap…
  Demo on waking up those tubers
- John Learner…
  Demo on starting dahlias from seed
Memo from Mike

Folks,

I wish you all a belated happy and healthy New Year. Hopefully we’ve all been able to survive this brutal winter and are now looking forward to the upcoming “dahlia season.” Thanks to all of our new and returning officers for volunteering their time and talents to DSO. We’ve got a great group to cope with several challenges this year.

One of our major goals is to find a new venue for our annual dahlia show. Our traditional site, the ParmaTown Mall, is renovating and will not be available this year. If you have some thoughts on possible locations, please bring them to our March meeting or contact any officer and we will pursue them. This is going to take a group effort to achieve a successful resolution to this problem.

Hopefully you and your tubers have survived this winter cold. Part of our March meeting will address “waking up” our tubers. We are still looking for some AA, A, and waterlily tubers for our plant propagation program. Contact any officer if you have some to donate and we’ll make arrangements to get them or just bring them to the March meeting.

Also on behalf of DSO, sincerest thanks to John and Joann Bendokaitis for all their years of dedication as officers in making this society the success it is. In a small degree of appreciation, we’ve asked them for input regarding our Flower of the Year. The decision is that “Just Peachy” (BB-SC-LB) will be that flower. If you have some extra tubers of that variety, please bring them to the April auction. Thanks.

If you have any thoughts or suggestions you’d like to see addressed, please let us know. Your input is important so that we can serve your needs.

Looking forward to seeing all of you at our March meeting. Here’s wishing us all a very productive and enjoyable dahlia year.

Mike
OFFICERS and CHAIRS

Mike Weber, President................................. 440-647-3162
Jerry Moreno, Past President......................... 440-543-5658
Emily Halderman, Co-1st Vice President..........330-697-7368
Alexandra Kermode, Co-1st Vice President.....440-543-8104
Jim Thompson, 2nd Vice President...............216-926-7419
Sharon Swaney, Treasurer and Membership....330-562-3296
Sarah Thompson, Recording Secretary.........216-926-7419
MaryAnn Moreno, Corresponding Secretary...440-543-5658
Dave Cap, Show Chair..............................440-888-5589
Barbara Hosta, Archives and Librarian.........216-524-2635
Jerry Moreno Digest Editor......................440-543-5658
Marge Janki, Cleveland Botanical Rep...........440-729-9714
Nancy Riopelle, Sunshine Chair...............330-483-3360
Jerry Moreno, ADS Representative.........440-543-5658
Sharon Swaney, Webmaster......................330-562-3296

REFRESHMENTS
Emily Halderman  MaryAnn Moreno  Marilyn Weber

MEETING DATES for 2014
March 21 Ron Zayac  Living Soil and Organic Fertilizer;
also Waking up tubers; Starting from Seeds
April 18 Tuber auction
May 16 Plant auction
June 20 New Introductions
August ?? Picnic
October 17 On Green Corp
November 21 Photo contest; Topic tbd
December 6 Holiday get-together...Alexandra, Emily
Ron Zayac, our March Speaker

Ron is owner/manager of the Canterbury Creek Gardens, a chemical-free garden center and micro farm that sells living soils, living organic fertilizers, beneficial insects and other chemical-free pest controls. He also sells certified organic produce from his property and other select local growers. Ron is now working on methods to organically grow super nutritious leafy greens and other crops. For the past 12 years, he has been using natural, bioremediation techniques to improve water quality of Northern Ohio retention ponds by restoring an ecological balance.

As a former consultant to the City of Cleveland Community Gardening Program, Ron managed gardens staffed by Cleveland high school students that in two years provided 25 tons of fresh produce to the Cleveland Food Bank. Canterbury Creek Gardens (formerly Warren Rd. Garden Center) is located in Westlake and holds seminars on organic gardening. Contact information: www.canterburycreekgardens.com.
Need your ideas as to what to include in your DSO Dahlia Digest. Give suggestions to Jerry. Thanks.

SHOWS for 2014

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 9—10</td>
<td>Cuyahoga County Fair</td>
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<td>Aug 15-17</td>
<td>Greater Columbus DS</td>
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<td>Aug 29</td>
<td>Geauga County Fair</td>
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<td>Aug 28—Sept 1</td>
<td>National</td>
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<td>Sept 5-7</td>
<td>DSO site tbd</td>
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<td>Sept 5-7</td>
<td>Pittsburgh DS</td>
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<td>Sept 12-14</td>
<td>MVDS/Midwest</td>
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<td>Sept 19-20</td>
<td>East Liverpool DS</td>
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<td>Oct 4-5</td>
<td>Petitti’s Oakwood</td>
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SALES

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>April 12</td>
<td>Petitti’s Oakwood</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 16-18</td>
<td>Holden Arboretum</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 15-17</td>
<td>Rockefeller Greenhouse</td>
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We will need a couple hours of your time to help at the sales. Please volunteer your expertise. Tks.

JUDGING SEMINARS

Ron hopes to continue to have 3 judging seminars. Two will be at our picnic site (yet to be determined) and at our Petitti’s show October 4. The third one will be announced soon.
Perhaps the single greatest attribute of our wonderful flower is its color. How many times have you been asked the question “Are they real?!?” by someone walking through our Parma show? The public’s fascination at our shows is substantially based on the size and the huge range of colors of the blooms we display.

Unlike some other national dahlia organizations, the ADS has done a good job of retaining a great range of colors in our shows. Keith Hammett, the dahlia and clivia guru from New Zealand, has applauded the ADS approach to classifying (and showing and judging) dahlias in that we have managed to retain and promote the diversity of colors we continue to see at our shows.

Color is a key element in our judging of dahlias, comprising 22% of the score for seedlings. Our Guide to Judging Dahlias goes through a fairly detailed explanation of color characteristics. There are a couple elements of that explanation we all need to know. Perhaps the key one is that the intensity or the saturation of a color in a dahlia does not translate to the quality of the color of the dahlia. That is, “if color is uniformly distributed in both a yellow pastel dahlia and a more saturated yellow one, the quality of color is not better in one than the other.” (GJD, p.11) For example, the color on a good Light Accord is of the same quality as that on a good Hamari Accord, even though the color on the Hamari Accord is more intense.

The picture at the right shows the B SC Y section at the Puget Sound Dahlia Society Show in 2011 (before Light Accord was changed to...
WH7!). It was tempting to reward the more intense colors of the Hamari Accords in the background. However, the color in the Light Accords in the foreground is of equal merit. The lighter color is achieved by the admixture of white and that does not reduce the quality of the color.

One other key point to be gleaned from the discussion of color in the GJD is that admixture of a color with black yields gray or muddy colors and does reduce the quality of the color. Unless it is pretty gross, graying is difficult to detect. I went through a ton of pictures trying to find an example of graying. The entry on the left has several issues, perhaps including a color that is somewhat gray. (It is also an example of a cultivar with a “two-tone” blend. Remember that question in the judge’s exam?)

Apparently women have a greater sensitivity to see color than men. This might be an even better area than most to listen to what our female colleagues have to say (at least on the subject of the quality of color in an entry). :-) Thank you, ladies!

Color is one of the attributes where somewhat different criteria apply between show and seedling judging. If you are judging a seedling in a Trial Garden and observe a tendency for the cultivar to have “wolf petals” (petals of a different color, often white) or to exhibit streaks of other colors in the florets in many of the blooms, it should be penalized relatively severely for Color. On the other hand, if you are judging a cultivar in a show and it exhibits a wolf petal or a couple streaks, perhaps at the back of the bloom, the penalty should be relatively slight. In the TG, you are making a decision on the future performance of the entry. If it is likely to forever exhibit that color weakness, the scoring penalty should be substantial. (GJD, p.11)

What are the other key color characteristics we need to have in mind in judging a seedling or a class at a show? Color uni-
formity throughout each ray floret is the first item cited in the judging manual. That assessment, like most, should be made at arm’s length. If we examine the bloom a few inches from our eyes, color variations, particularly at the base of the florets, will almost certainly be detected. The surface texture of the florets should be lustrous and appealing. Blends should exhibit uniform color distribution. Bicolors should have uniform, consistent color distributions with little bleeding of the colors into each other. Note, too, that bicolors should either be striped or show the second color just at the tips (1/6 to 1/4) of the ray florets. Variegated cultivars will have uniform base color(s!) throughout the floret with stripes or flecks of a contrasting color uniformly distributed on all the florets.

Color faults include colors that are dull, splotchy, streaked, faded, and blooms that exhibit distracting bracts, petaloids with a different color, or blends with a poor distribution of the second color. In show judging, bruising from travel damage, insect damage, and spray deposits can be color faults. With these faults in mind, and with the discussion of fault observations among your show judging team, a decision on which is the best among show entries can be reasonably straightforward. If, on the other hand, you are working by yourself in a Trial Garden and you need to come up with a point penalty for an entry, the challenge is more substantial.

Let’s consider the example on the right. The first step, of course, is to determine the color. What would you suggest? I would think that red with a yellow eye zone (i.e., S RD/y) might be best. The TG, with the benefit of being able to see a lot of blooms, concluded that it was a dark blend of dark red and yellow (i.e., S DB DR/Y). That determination emphasizes the yellow at the tips of the ray florets as well as the eye zone yellow at their base. Ok, judges, how are going to get to
a point penalty??

Begin by identifying the faults. You probably start with nonuniformity, like I do. It is pretty obvious, both on the tips of the ray florets and the eye zones. The streaking along the veins is also pretty obvious. Those ray florets at 5 and 6 o’clock show some blotchiness, too. Next, ask yourself if this is a “passing” color. You probably say no; I do too. If you don’t have a lot of judging experience, you might want to refer back to your old copies of my previous seminar presentations. (-:-) (The Guide to Judging Dahlias does not provide a lot of help in translating fault observations to numeric deductions.) My opinion is that a passing score would correspond to the observation of not more than a few minor faults. That is largely a consequence of my seedling judging experience. If we were to translate our observations above, to one major, one minor, and one very minor fault, what should the deduction be? My answer would be to give color less than 80%, perhaps a 6 point penalty.

Having said all that about that example, I went back in my files to see what I actually did when I evaluated that entry in the Spokane TG. I classified it as S DB RD22/YL18/y18 (i.e. as a blend with an eye zone). My comments were “Bad streaks, non-uniform, blotchy” and I took 8 points off for color. I wonder if the yellow on the tips was more obvious in person that it is in the photograph. There is no substitute for experience in generating numeric penalties. Latch on to one of the Senior Judges at a show and walk through their scoring process. Take a scoresheet out into your garden and 'play' with your seedlings!

I went back to look at my November 2013 column and have concluded that there were a couple tough color assignments there. Determining the colors of our open-centered Blossom Gulch seedlings is going to help us learn a lot about the characterization of color! Please look at Lou Paradise’s procedure for classifying open-centered dahlias on pages 6 and 7 in the new 2014 CHD. With that guidance in hand, see what you come up with for the classification of the seedling at left. I’ll talk about it next month.

Ron
About One of Us…

It has been getting harder and harder to think of what to include in our DSO Digest. Someone suggested that members might like to know a little more about ourselves—a kind of “up close and personal” that one of the TV channels used to run, and perhaps still does, on sports personalities. I thought it to be a good idea and so, here goes. So, please don’t be bashful or hesitate to contribute if I come calling on you. I picked on Ron Miner and Mike Weber to begin this feature. Ron is mentor to many of us and is more involved at the national level than the rest of us combined. Mike is our current president, a great grower, and helps to organize our cuttings project as an essential part of our mission to promote the dahlia.

Jerry

From Sarah Thompson, Recording Secretary

A few major notes from the DSO Board Meeting 1/17/14

- DSO renewal memberships completed to Cleveland Botanical ($60); Garden Club of Ohio ($15); Midwest Conf ($35)
- Flower of the Year to be named by John and Joann Bendokaitis to honor their many years of service to DSO
- Artistic theme for Sept and Petitti’s shows to be determined by Sharon Swaney and Jim Thompson
- ParmaTown Mall is no longer available as our September show site. All are encouraged to search for a new site.
- Propagation of cuttings to begin at Willoway early March
- An increasing number of our small white vases are breaking each year. Board approved purchasing 100 of the ADS medium-sized black vases as replacements.
- Board approved continued support of the Gardeners of Greater Cleveland Scholarship
- Use of DSO Memorial Fund to be reviewed
- Members to be encouraged to receive Digest electronically
About One of Us...Ron Miner

In 2000 after 38 years, at Republic Steel and its successor LTV Steel, Ron retired as Director of Research. His wife of 51 years is Barbara. They have three married children (Wendy, Jeff, and Cary) whose spouses are (Todd, Nikki, and Chris) plus five grandchildren Drew, Evan, Dalton, Bryce, Paige. Do those names sound familiar? Ron’s hobbies are dahlias in the summer, Florida nature in the winter, and duplicate bridge all year round.

Ron’s interest in the dahlia began when Pat Lybarger’s garden was featured in a Plain Dealer article in advance of the ~1987 DSO annual show. He and Barbara knew Pat’s sister and asked if they could go to see Pat’s garden. While there, Pat broke off a Kelvin Floodlight to throw away—and “the rest is pretty much history.”

The following fall he joined DSO and ADS. He has been VP, Pres, and currently Judging Chair of DSO. His involvement in ADS is impressive having begun as “honorary” Regional VP, then 2nd VP for Bud Moore, then President. Since then, he became Trial Garden Chair and Website Coordinator, the latter now turned over to Linda Holmes-Cook and our own Sharon Swaney. He encourages dahlia growers to join ADS and meet the really nice, knowledgeable people that participate in regional and national shows. “Interacting with them helps to gain valuable information on how to grow, show, cut, sell,...dahlias.”

Ron is DSO’s claim to fame in new introductions, 33 to date! The biggest thrill he gets from hybridizing is seeing a spectacular bloom for the first time it has ever existed! “That is very, very exciting” he says as well as “It is also fun to be able to name them after family and friends.” Seeing them do well in shows and in seedling competitions is pretty neat too, he adds.

I asked him for his favorite bloom knowing darn well that his answer without hesitation would be Barbara Miner! 😊 Ron grows about 500 plants plus first year seedlings.

He stores almost all of his tubers in Saran Wrap in cardboard boxes stacked against the outside basement wall and insulated from the basement. The target is to keep them uniformly cool and below 50F. For various reasons he can’t get them started until mid-May. He uses 4” pots or split half-gallon milk cartons but often plants the bare tubers directly in the ground. Planting time is around end of May.

Ron encourages us to 1) grow some seedlings and bring them to our shows, and 2) participate in the Midwest and National ADS shows. “Both will expand your enjoyment of growing dahlias; they are just great experiences!”
About One of Us...Mike Weber, current DSO President

Mike is retired, truly RETIRED he emphasizes. For 24 years he worked for the Lorain County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities as a Job Placement Specialist, Marketing Specialist and finally as the first Operations Manger for three Production Work Centers employing over 600 client/consumers.

He has four brothers and two sisters, three cats, and a lovely wife Marilyn who also contributes time to growing dahlias and to the DSO.

His interest in the dahlia began when his father who while living in Florida, sent him a package of five tubers to try. He didn’t know what a dahlia was let alone tubers. In fact, he thought that they were dead but because his father sent them he planted them over his septic system. They grew without any help from Mike! He liked everything he saw—the colors (although he is colorblind as is Ron come to think of it), forms, and sizes and as the saying goes, “the rest is history. I keep growing them because it’s an addiction!” His favorite forms have become semi-cactus, cactus, waterlilies, and stellars. Favorite sizes are B and BB’s. Favorite blooms are Pam Howden and Kenora Wildfire.

Mike stores individual tubers with vermiculite in one gallon zip lock bags. He puts the bags in wooden crates lined with newspaper and places them on shelves in their unheated garage. He tucks them in with comforters “borrowed” from Marilyn’s storage closet. He starts individual tubers in pots and trays of potting mixture.

He joined DSO about 15-20 years ago, can’t remember just when. He and I have swapped being president a couple times. He is also a member of ADS and finds it very beneficial to read its Bulletin which has updated information regarding all facets of dahlia growing. “It is a great aid for me.”

Outside of growing dahlias, he enjoys golf, bowling, racquetball, and landscaping projects.
DAHLIA DIRT

Check out this article from Mother Earth News entitled *Edible Dahlia Bulbs*

www.motherearthnews.com/real-food/dahlia-bulbs-zmaz09aszraw.aspx

Have you ever seen a lasagna bed? Well, here’s one!

If you ever are in Midland, Michigan, take a look at Dahlia Hill, 3000 plants. Amazing.

www.dahliahill.org

ADS Best Photo 2013
Paul Chupek

Paul is member Nancy Riopelle’s brother. The bloom is Baron Jerry.
Dahlias of Today is an annual publication of the Puget Sound Dahlia Association. It is filled with very interesting articles on dahlia culture, on a number of different topics, terrific color pictures of new dahlias, along with information from all the major dahlia nurseries. The publication typically is about 100 pages in length. Jerry will bring a copy of last year’s edition to the March meeting.

The regular cost is $17.95 but we are submitting a bulk joint order with the Mahoning Valley DS to bring the cost down to $11 per copy. If you are interested in getting a copy, you need to let Jerry know (Moreno@jcu.edu) by the March meeting. No extra copies will be ordered. Write a check for $11 made out to DSO and either mail it to Jerry Moreno, 8232 Westhill Drive, Chagrin Falls, OH 44023 or bring it to the March 21 meeting.

Please pay dues before April 1.
See form on next page.
Thanks.
DSO/ADS Membership Application
(Memberships are calendar year.)

Please fill out completely (even for renewals).

Date: _____________________
Name(s): ______________________________________
Address: _______________________________________
_______________________________________
_______________________________________
Phone: ______________  Alt Phone: _______________
Email(s): _______________________________________

PLEASE choose one of the following membership offerings:

[ ] DSO (includes husband and wife) $10
[ ] DSO + ADS Individual Membership $34
[ ] DSO + ADS Family Membership $37

For ADS “Snowbird” service add $6.
Enter winter address here.

_______________________________________
_______________________________________
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Would you like to receive your Digest in digital format only? (Be sure to include an email address above) Please circle:

Yes  No

Please make checks payable to DSO.
Mail to: Sharon Swaney
340 Aurora-Hudson Rd.
Aurora, OH 44202
DAHLIA SOCIETY of OHIO
MaryAnn Moreno
8232 Westhill Drive
Chagrin Falls, OH 44023