Friday, October 19 Meeting
7:30 p.m.
Busch Community Room
7501 Ridge Road, Parma
Just south of Pleasant Valley Road

Program

- **Speaker** - Ron Miner on
  * His fertilizing experiments
  * “Lasagna beds”
  * Photos of 2012 Northwest shows including Swan Island and gardens

- **Demo** - Dividing a clump for storage
Hi Dahlia Lovers,

Where did the summer go? It’s hard to believe that another dahlia season is about to close. Despite the hot and dry weather that was not conducive to the dahlia, hopefully your plants recovered and have blossomed with beautiful flowers once the rains of September arrived. Even our grass has returned its color from brown to green!

Mahoning managed to have a terrific show even in August. The rain came in time for us to have beautiful shows at ParmaTown, Columbus, and East Liverpool. Let’s hope the frost stays away and we can finish the year with a gorgeous show at Pettiti’s Oakwood on October 6-7. If you can, please plan on attending the judging seminar that afternoon.

I hope that you can come to the October meeting where Ron will talk on his fertilizing experiment, “lasagna beds” and show some amazing pictures of the National Show, other shows, and gardens in the northwest.

Also, bring a clump to the meeting to get some first-hand advice on how to divide clumps for storage. It’s hard to describe how to divide clumps; face-to-face demos are the best.

**EMERGENCY:** Please send me some suggestions for our November meeting program. At the moment, the photo contest and Dahlia Q&A are it! With nobody having volunteered to be DSO’s Program Chair for this year, it’s up to you members of DSO as a whole to provide program suggestions! Put your thinking caps on. Super thanks.

Jerry
OFFICERS-CHAIRS/PHONE NUMBERS

Jerry Moreno, President..................440-543-5658
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Refreshments:
Joann Bendokaitis
MaryAnn Moreno
Linda Vuletich

MEETING DATES for 2012

March 16 New Introductions; Test/Prep Your Soil
April 20 Tuber auction
May 18 Plant auction
June 15 Nancy and Russ Riopelle,
Beekeeping & Tasting Various Honey Types
August 5 Picnic at Linda and Stan Vuletich’s
Artistic Design demo; Judging Seminar
October 19 Ron Miner on dahlia experiments and photos
from the National Show; Digging and storing
November 16 Photo contest; Program tba.
December 1 Holiday get-together
PETTITI SHOW—Oakwood
Saturday October 6
Set-up: 8:00 a.m.
Staging: After set-up - 11:00
Judging: 11:00 - 12:30
Dismantle show—Sunday 5:00

ARTISTIC DESIGN ENTRY at PETTITI SHOW
THEME—Dahlias and Pumpkins
(Pumpkins may be real or artificial)

JUDGING SEMINAR
1:00 - 3:30
Pettiti’s Oakwood
Bring your seedlings from:
Ron’s dahlia seeds (2009)
The Boley stellar seeds (2010)
The anemone seeds (2012)
+ your others
October Meeting Program

Ron Miner will be our speaker. He will cover two topics: his fertilizer experiments and the trip he and Barbara took to the National Show. The fertilizer experiments produced largely negative results. However, there are some important lessons to be learned from the negative results. Very positive results were found in his “lasagna beds.” Come and learn a bit about this modified approach to composting and mulching in your garden.

Ron and Barbara’s trip to the Northwest was filled with two wonderful dahlia shows, visits to three official Trial Gardens, as well as official and unofficial tours of over a dozen beautiful private gardens (including the Swan Island Dahlia Festival) as well as a number of great sightseeing stops and a 50th anniversary at the Annual Show Banquet! They will show pictures of some of the highlights of the trip.
The JUDGE’s Corner
Ron Miner - baronminer@aol.com

“This is the worst Trial Garden I’ve ever seen!” I told the judges gathered on September 16 and I’ve visited literally all of them. Of course, I was talking about my own back yard. Judging seedlings is a requirement to be an American Dahlia Society (ADS) judge. The ADS judging rules allow Accreditation Chairmen (I am one of them) to use a private garden as a substitute for a real Trial Garden (TG). That lets judges like those of us in the DSO participate in the judging of seedlings near home when a real Trial Garden is a substantial distance away. (There used to be one in Youngstown, but the closest now is in Indiana.) As ugly as my garden was, nonetheless I think it helped to serve as a refresher for Accredited (AC) and Senior (SR) judges on how to judge seedlings and to provide everyone with the opportunity to meet the seedling requirements to maintain their judging status. Perhaps most importantly, it gave our Candidate (CN) judges the opportunity to do some quantitative evaluation of a number of seedlings and other cultivars in a garden setting.

Recall that there are two ways that seedlings are evaluated for possible entry into the American Dahlia Society Classification Book: “on the bench” and in a Trial Garden. The Seedling Bench Evaluation (SBE) is done on three blooms staged in a container. The Trial Garden is done on the blooms in several plants in a garden.

I set up three containers of three different seedlings for SBE and had a series of five Trial Garden entries marked in the garden. (One of the seedlings was “on the bench” as well as in the garden.) In addition, for practice in simply classifying cultivars (i.e., identifying their size, form, and color), I marked 15 other cultivars in my garden.

Three teams of judges were formed headed by Jerry Moreno, Randy
Foith, and Dave Cap who led Candidate judges (Rob and Sharon Swaney, Jim Thompson and Sarah Luikart, Dan Kelly, and Bill Takaes) through the process of quantitatively evaluating several seedlings. Jim Chuey, Kathy Foith, and Barb Miner added to their judged-seedlings totals and provided scores to compare with the CN judging teams. After an hour or so of judging, as a group we then discussed our results and the questions that arose in the process. Following Glenn Ruth’s basic judging rules, we had a good time and we all learned something about the judging of seedlings!

By the way, here is the picture of the seedling that was both in the TG list and on the SBE list. Both sets of scores were very similar. Nice job, teams!

It is hard to imagine that we’re almost to the end of the show season, isn’t it! In some ways, we’ve saved the best for last! This is the fourth year we’ve been doing the Seedling Challenge and the associated judging seminars at the Petitti show. As a consequence, those of you who have been growing the open-centered seedlings for four years are now eligible to enter them on the ADS Seedling Bench! Remember that you need to enter three blooms in a container. They need to be as similar as possible. The entry will be scored and if it scores 85 points or more, it will become an “official” ADS dahlia and
you get to name it! You should also have a plan for introducing your new cultivar to the dahlia world. If you have questions about how to do that, be sure to ask me. Send me an email or we can discuss the process at the show.

The Boley stellar seedlings become eligible next year. If you have good ones, you should be thinking about putting those seedlings into various Trial Gardens next spring. Bring them to the Petitti show to see how they do among their ST cousins; that should help you decide about entering them. The second special seedling section at the Petitti show will be for single blooms of those 2010 Boley ST seedlings.

The third special seedling class at Petitti’s will be the anemone (AN) Seedling Challenge for 2012. I’ve seen a couple AN seedlings that others have grown from those seeds. (Hooray!) We will, however, also include any of those seedlings we distributed last spring; they don’t need to be AN. We’ll pick the best and the worst of each of the 2012 class during the seminar on Saturday afternoon.

The final class will be for any new seedlings you’d like to show. I can’t resist showing you one of John Learner’s that he brought to the DSO show at ParmaTown. Can you see the petaloids on each of the ray florets? Amazing! It looks either like a fully double collarette or a formal dec with contrasting petaloids on each ray floret. It was a remarkable and very interesting bloom! Bring some more on the 6th if you can, John!

The logistics for the judging seminar on Saturday, Oct 6 will be to judge the show as usual in the morning (hopefully including some ADS Seedling Bench Evaluations on those 2009 seedlings). Barbara will supply a very simple lunch for those interested in staying for the judging seminar in the afternoon. We will then work our way through the four classes of seedlings, picking the best of each in three classes and the worst of the new 2012 anemone and open-centered class. Remember that the worst entry needs to show the worst and lowest scoring combination of the judging attributes; i.e., form,
color, etc. A pair of leaves and a stem doesn’t count! :-)

Please do some homework on the Anemone form. The Guide to Judging Dahlias, the Classification and Handbook of Dahlias, and the outline of our 2012 DSO Judging Seminars (now available on the website) will be useful references.

Barbara and I had an opportunity to visit Blossom Gulch Dahlias a couple weeks ago. It was wonderful! Here are a couple of their Anemone seedlings. More about Blossom Gulch later.

Mark Your Calendars
Holiday Get-together
Saturday, December 1
1:00—3:00
BURNTWOOD TAVERN
CHAGRIN FALLS, OHIO
Digging, Dividing, Storing
A checklist
(condensed from an article in ADS Bulletin 9/2012)

Come to the meeting to get first-hand demo of dividing.

- Before the killer frost, identify plants that did not produce or produced inferior blooms, including signs of virus. Incinerate if possible.
- After killer frost, cut stalks 6”-12” from ground. Cover open stalk with foil to keep water from going down to the crown.
- Be sure to attach a label with correct variety name on the cut stalk.
- A week later, dig the clumps. Handle with care as tuber necks are fragile. Turn over to drain out any water. Leave clump out for a couple hours to harden the tuber.
- Wash away soil from clump with gentle stream from garden hose.
- In dividing clumps, each division must have a piece of the crown with an eye. Sterilize cutting tool with fire after dividing each clump to help prevent spread of virus if present. Use several knives (hook-shaped carpet knives work well) to allow time for cooling.
- Discard the “mother root.”
- Remove all feeder roots and any stalk. Both promote rot. Cut away any brown or rusty colored areas.
- Make a liquid fungicide dip with Captan, sulphur, or Benlate. See containers for dilution rates.
- Place tubers in dip for 15 minutes. Discard any tubers that float; they will not keep. Remove and transfer to open container to start drying. Be sure to keep identification label with the tubers or mark tubers with “Bottle of Ink in a Pencil” markers.

- Let roots dry for 24 hours. Do not put on cement.

- No matter the method, the key to storing is cool constant temperature—40 to 45 degrees.

Methods:

i) Use coarse vermiculite in plastic bags. Equal amount of vermiculite to volume of tubers. Could add a little sulphur, Captan, or bath talc to bag if did not dip the tubers. Stack bags in doubled brown grocery bags. “Some growers contend that the bags must be air tight; others that they should only be twisted so that a little air can escape. Some growers pierce holes in their plastic bags. In general, the smaller and thinner the roots, the more air tight one would want the bags.”

ii) Place tubers in wood or cardboard containers with vermiculite separating layers. If one uses a box, the moisture could escape from the vermiculite. To retain the moisture, there should be newspaper at least eight sheets thick to line all sides of the container, and the top of the container should be closed.

iii) The “saran-wrap” method.
Find an excellent article on this method at the American Dahlia Society website www.dahlia.org. Click on Dahlia Articles and then click on The Saran Wrap Tuber Storage Method.

- Inspect tubers monthly during the winter. Throw away tubers that show signs of rotting. If tubers appear to be shriveling, add a small spray of water.

- Bottom line: Once you find a method that works for you, use it religiously!
DAHLIA SOCIETY of OHIO
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