

# DAHLIA DIGEST

## *DAHLIA SOCIETY OF OHIO*

Since 1930

VOL. 2015 ISSUE 3  
May 2015



**Friday, May 15 Meeting**

**7:30 p.m.**

**Busch Community Room**

**7501 Ridge Road, Parma**

**Just south of Pleasant Valley Road**

# STUPENDOUS PLANT AUCTION



## *Memo from Mike*

Hi Folks,

As I'm writing this letter, we are experiencing the best weekend weather of the year. Hopefully this will continue and we can all get ready for our dahlia planting season.

Thanks to all who participated in our tuber sales at both Petitti's and our April meeting. They were the most successful sales we've had for several years and it's all attributed to the volunteering of time and tubers by our members. Hopefully, we can duplicate these results at our upcoming plant sales at Holden Arboretum: May 15-17, Rockefeller Gardens: May 14-16 and our own plant auction at our meeting on May 15<sup>th</sup>. We are in need of some more volunteers at Holden and Rockefeller so if you could spare an hour or two at either of these locations, please call the contact folks shown later in this Digest. It's a fun experience so please give it serious consideration.

At our May meeting we will be voting on our proposal to raise membership dues. This will be your last opportunity to voice your thoughts regarding this matter.

Sharon is putting together an email register for the website. If you do not want to have your email listed there, please let her know. Thanks.

Barbara Hosta received a request from Francine in Brookpark who is looking for dahlias for her daughter's wedding. If interested give her a call at 216-299-9339.

That's it for now. Got to start getting the dahlia beds ready for planting. We've labored through a long winter to finally get to this point. Good planting to all and hopefully we'll see you at one of our sales this month and definitely at our May meeting.

Mike



VISIT YOUR DSO WEBSITE  
SHARON SWANEY, WEBMASTER  
[WWW.DAHLIASOCIETYOFOHIO.ORG](http://WWW.DAHLIASOCIETYOFOHIO.ORG)

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**OFFICERS and CHAIRS**

**Mike Weber, President..... 440-647-3162**  
**Jerry Moreno, Past President..... 440-543-5658**  
**Emily Halderman, 1st Vice President.....330-697-7368**  
**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**  
**Barbara Hosta, Cleveland Botanical Rep.....216-524-2635**  
**Nancy Riopelle, Sunshine Chair.....330-483-3360**  
**Tony Evangelista, ADS Representative.....440-867-3711**  
**Sharon Swaney, Webmaster.....330-562-3296**

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**REFRESHMENTS**

**Barbara Hosta, Nancy Riopelle,  
Marilyn Weber**



**MEETING DATES for 2015**

**March 20      New Introductions; Waking up tubers**  
**April 17      Tuber auction**  
**May 15        Plant auction**  
**June 19      Ron Miner and Tony Evangelista...on virus**  
**August xx    Picnic at Brant and Carol's**  
**October 16   Photo contest, speaker pending**  
**November 20 Alexandra Kermode...another experiment**  
**December 5   Holiday get-together...Wembley Club**

**YOUR HELP is NEEDED**  
**At ROCKEFELLER and/or HOLDEN**  
**Please volunteer a couple hours!**  
**Call the contact person to sign up. Thanks!**

**Rockefeller Park Greenhouse**  
On E 88th off Martin Luther King Drive

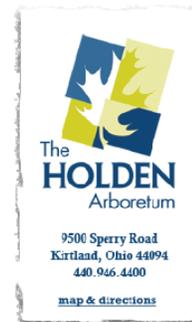


9:00—4:00 Thursday May 14  
9:00—4:00 Friday May 15  
9:00—4:00 Saturday May 16

**CONTACT PERSON: BARBARA HOSTA**  
[bjh074@gmail.com](mailto:bjh074@gmail.com) or call 216-524-2635

Note that there is NO food service available at Rockefeller so bring a lunch if you are working over the noon hour. Also, lots of plants of all kinds available to buy.

**The Holden Arboretum**  
9500 Sperry Rd Kirkland



Noon—6:00 Friday May 15  
10:00—4:00 Saturday May 16  
10:00—4:00 Sunday May 17

**CONTACT PERSON: ROB SWANEY**  
[robswaney@windstream.net](mailto:robswaney@windstream.net) of call 330-562-3296

Note that food IS available for purchase at Holden in addition to tons of plants of all sorts from a variety of vendors.

## **Getting to Know Us**

### **NANCY RIOPELLE**

About 6 years ago I attended a neighboring garden club meeting because I was interested in their topic which I believe was called “Delightful Dahlias.” Only have seen the bedding dahlias in the garden centers, I was speechless when Mike Weber and Dave Cap walked in with the most beautiful bucket of huge dahlias. After a fantastic program and presentation, they convinced the crowd that you too can grow these. Anxious to learn more, I joined DSO in the fall and learned how to cut up and store the tubers. I attended the very fun tuber auction in April and bought a very nice selection. I benched them and planted them when it was time. They were doing good. Then it rained. And rained. And rained. 3” that week. Oh my. We had some serious wilt going on here. I emailed Jerry and asked if this was beginners luck or was I doing something wrong? Well, you know the answer. Rot. I was so sad all my hard work was ruined. Well, Jerry saw he had a fish on the line and wasn’t going to let it get away. He graciously offered to give me all his extras so I could still have a dahlia garden that year. I was thrilled to have another chance. Well, the rest of the year went well and let’s just say I’m “hooked.” Thanks Jerry!

I currently plant around 70 different dahlias. My favorites are the ball dahlias and lacinated ones and definitely others like “Elma Elizabeth” and “Baron Jeff”. I use the cellophane wrapped method and store my tubers in the refrigerator. Yep, the one in the kitchen, not the garage. Regular setting was a tad bit too cold so I “warmed it up” a notch and it’s perfect. My husband teases that he has to drink warm beer so my tubers can be comfortable. The sacrifices we

make! We are avid skiers and spend the month of March in Colorado on the slopes every year. We get home just in time to get the tubers out of cold storage. I'm also active in the Valley City Garden Club, various Watercolor Guilds, and the Medina County Beekeepers Assn. We currently have around 25 hives and I help with the sales and by-products such as hand lotions, beeswax candles, and lip balms. I leave the actual beekeeping part to Buzz. Yes, that's the nickname his folks gave him before he was born. Talk about fate.

I enjoy the friendly competition at the DSO shows, helping out where I can, and now sharing all my "extra" plants with all my friends. It's the end of April now and my living room is currently filled with trays of soil and tubers and they are sprouting nicely. Looking forward to it finally warming up so I can put them out on the porch and reclaim my space. We've since made raised beds for them so if it happens to rain another 3" this summer we've got it covered. "Delightful Dahlias". Yes they are.



Top of Vail  
Colorado

Kayaking at Portage  
Lakes with Emily



### Notes of April Meeting



- Tuber sale at Petitti's. Great success. \$570.
- Volunteers needed for Rockefeller and Holden plant sales in May. Contact Mike or Dave.
- Discussion on proposal to raise dues revised at March-meeting. See proposal elsewhere in this Digest. Vote at May meeting. No concerns were raised.
- 65 Digest copies were sent in April and 25 electronically. Sharon has one version whose format is exactly the same as the postal version. Please let Sharon or MaryAnn know if you would help cost by choosing to receive the Digest electronically. Thanks.
- Hank Doll of the Gardeners of Greater Cleveland thanked DSO for our donation toward their college scholarship program. They chose two recipients, one from Orange HS who will study environmental engineering and the other from Shaker HS who will be going into landscape design. Barbara Hosta represents DSO at the Gardeners award banquet.
- Botanical Garden Chair Barbara Hosta attended the Botanical Affiliate member meeting for DSO. The Botanical will be posting all of their 60 affiliates meeting dates on their website shortly. The Cleveland PD will be writing articles of each of the Botanical affiliates. That should help DSO to promote its mission. The Botanical is having a treehouse exhibit this summer and Holden is building a new canopy walk that should be very exciting to view the gorgeous landscape.
- A motion was made, seconded and passed to donate \$200 to the Michigan host society for this year's Midwest Show.
- Thanks to Mike and Doc for leading the tuber auction.
- Notes submitted by Emily in Sarah's absence.

**Proposal to Change Dues  
VOTE to be taken at this May meeting**

**A proposal to increase DSO dues was presented and discussed at the March and April meetings. A vote will take place at the May meeting.**



**Proposal:  
\$15 for single membership  
\$20 for family membership**

If passed, the new dues structure will be in place immediately.

The change is being proposed based on:

- Our dues have been at \$10 since 1999.
  - Our deficit last year was \$1500 and has been in the red the past three years.
  - Price of tubers that we purchase to augment our sales and cutting propagation has increased.
  - The Midwest Conference has encouraged societies to increase the number of categories being awarded Court recognition in the name of promoting all forms of the dahlia. We have done so the past few years.
  - The current Digest in color costs \$11 to copy and mail for 6 issues per year. Before this year, the cost has been donated.
  - Supposing that there are 100 family members, the increase in dues would produce \$1000. The Board recognizes that the dues increase alone will not allow DSO to fulfill its mission while maintaining a fiscally viable society. Adjustments to current expenditures will be reviewed as well.
- Thank you for your understanding and support.

**Special Awards for Midwest Show 2015  
Ann Arbor Michigan, September 5-6**

- Best Zorro...\$125  
Best Country Dahlia...\$50  
Best Nellie's Rose...\$50  
Best Penhill Introduction...Vase  
Best Valentine Garden Introduction...\$50  
(Valentine Lil, Nancy Ann, Danae, Stella R)  
Best Baron open center Introduction...\$100  
(Baron Aunt Dorothy, Baron Kathy, Baron Sylvia.  
Baron Larry, Barbara's Favorite)  
Best Marcella Louise...\$250  
Best Hilltop Introduction...\$100 gift certificate  
Best JS Introduction...\$50  
Best Canadian Introduction...\$100  
Best Jackie Evangelista...\$100  
Best Emmalia...\$50



Midwest Flower of the Year—Any size White dahlia  
Registration form and show schedule at:  
[www.midwestdahliaconference.org/MDA/index.htm](http://www.midwestdahliaconference.org/MDA/index.htm)

**DSO Flower of the  
Year**

**Chandra Kay  
M F D Y**

**Introduced by  
DSO member**



## **The JUDGE's Corner**

**Ron Miner - baronminer@aol.com**

There is an important footnote to add to my “vacation” column last month. That is that, with the support of the Sheetz-Chuey Foundation, you and every ADS member will be receiving a pocket-sized brochure with the June issue of the ADS Bulletin. That brochure will provide some pictures of foliage of dahlias that have virus as well as some commentary on what to do if you have plants with similar foliage. (It boils down to “If in doubt, throw it out!”) While the primary use of that brochure will be in your own garden, you should also bring it along to our shows. I plan to ask you to use it when you are judging! We will be penalizing entries with foliage exhibiting virus (check p. 28 in the judging manual and bear in mind that we won't need to worry about confusion with nutrient deficiencies!). Thanks, Jim, for your ongoing support!

Ok, back to the big picture for judging dahlias. Our most common judging experience is show judging. Let's say that you've brought a few blooms (or better yet, a ton of blooms) to the show and have not really finished staging when the show chair or the judging chair says it's time to get to work. You grab your Show Schedule, your Classification and Handbook of Dahlias, and your new virus brochure and head over to the judges' meeting. If the meeting looks like the one below, you're probably in the Pacific Northwest. This picture covers about half the judges at the meeting at the 2012 National show. Big or small, the next steps are basically the same—a discussion with the team and a walk through the



'sort of' worked! Fortunately, virtually all teams now discuss their observations and conclusions. Those observations and the opinions expressed in those discussions should, of course, be based on the Judging Manual. In that way, all the team members benefit from the discussion. If you are the team leader, you will need to encourage the less experienced judges to contribute to the conversation. If you are the least experienced judge on the team, you still need to be comfortable in making comments on your observations. Remember, though, those comments should be based on your perception of the contents of the judging manual.

As a member of the team, you need to listen to and respect the perspectives of the other members of the team. Do you remember Glenn Ruth telling us to have a good time and learn something?

That is still excellent advice! Another important issue is that you need to adopt and "own" the team conclusion. When discussing the results with the exhibitor you need to say something to the effect that 'we considered that point, but concluded the color issues lead us to choose the other bloom.' You should not say 'I agree with you; but you know how Joe is about form.' The decisions are team decisions. Pages 5 and 6 in the judging manual discuss the team approach

The other starting point for the judging process is developing an overview of the entries in your section. Perhaps the most important step in that process is making sure that everything in your section belongs in your section. You need to move entries that are misplaced as early in the process as possible so that they are included in the judging in the section where it belongs.

It is also important to have a sense of the general quality of the entries at the show. The quality of the Novice classes at the Cuyahoga Fair will be different from the quality of the Open B classes at the National. That does not mean that you should not



*Glenn and Jerry at the Cuyahoga Fair Show in 2007*

should probably use special entry tags for the Novice sections so we can provide feedback on the basis for our conclusions. Be sure to write a short note on the current entry tags to help exhibitor understand what might be a confusing choice to them.



*Five wonderful (Yellow FD!) Edna Cs at the 2014 National show (Steve Santose)*

I have so far left unsaid one of the most basic requirements in judging; that is maintaining a fair and unprejudiced mindset in the judging process. I am very confident that we all do our best to honor that requirement. There are, however, some subtle issues you should keep in mind. One is your own preferences for form and color. Barbara will tell you that, for me, all colors are equal; except that yellow is the best. When I am judging at the head table, I need sometimes to remind myself that the best entry might actually not be yellow! Similarly, we all probably prefer (FD for me!) one of the fully double forms over the others. You need to be sure to keep in mind that each of our forms are of equal merit and that each of the colors in our ADS color chart are of equal merit.

Another area of potential prejudice to keep in mind is that you may not really want to know the name of the exhibitor when you are in the process of judging the show. Therefore, keep that in mind when you are staging your entries. We are all occasionally ‘blown away’ by a bucket full of blooms that Randy and Kathy or Jim and Harriet or Tony and Jackie ... or others of our friends and colleagues ... are hauling into the staging area. My counsel is to try to avoid associating specific blooms with specific exhibitors. You won’t want to be aware of that bit of information when you get out on the show table later in the morning!

In our local shows, it is almost impossible to avoid judging sections where you have entries in some of the classes. Obviously, you don’t want to judge the class that includes your entry; but what should you do? The best strategy would be to just quietly step back from the rest of the team while they judge the class. That, however, is usually difficult, particularly if two of the judges on the team

have entries in the class. It is probably best to let the chairman of the team know that you need to step out of the judging of the class, then step away from the table entirely. It is best to avoid watching over the shoulders of the rest of the judging team. It is also important that you avoid doing anything that would identify your entry from the rest. You might need to step out again when the section winner is chosen!

The interactions among your team members need to be positive and respectful. The Senior Judges on the team need to help the Accredited Judges and, particularly, the Candidate Judges understand their comments and their reasoning. Comments and questions from even from the newest of the Candidate Judges should be treated with respect and used as a teaching moment—for both the Candidate and the team! The team does need to balance those teaching moments with the need to get the job accomplished in a reasonable time frame. That translates to avoiding agonizing over decisions, particularly if those decisions involve resolving the 2nd and 3rd place entries. In very close calls between entries of very similar quality, standing back 6' or 8' and determining the best overall appearance of the entries will usually lead to the best decision.

If you haven't completed the planning of your garden, I encourage you to dedicate some space to building stock of your best of your Blossom Gulch seedlings. Next spring (2016) you will be able to enter those cultivars in the ADS Trial Gardens for evaluation. I recommend sending them (3 tubers each) to at least five of the Trial Gardens in order to provide the best opportunity to win a Medal for your entry. We average the best three scores among the Trial Gardens for each entry to determine the highest average score to win, in the case of the Blossom Gulch seedlings, the Evie Gullikson Medal. I hope we will have huge classes of those BG seedlings up for Seedling Bench Evaluation at the 2016 shows. We will probably use that process for the Judging Seminar at the 2016 Petitti show.

For the 2015 Judging Seminar at Petitti's, we will go back to determining the best and the worst seedlings from the seeds that will be distributed at the May meeting. We will evaluate seedlings both from Fully Double and Open-Centered parents.

*Ron*

## **PLANTING in MAY**

With soil preparation completed in April or early May, (recall pH between 6.5 and 7.0) and tubers started indoors the first of May, it is time to think about planting sometime after the often-cited last frost date of May 18. With soil temperature hopefully at 60 degrees, it is the perfect time for putting in all of the plants you bought at the May auction or sales at Holden and Rockefeller!

Dahlias like 6 to 8 hours of full sun. Those of us who have at best 5 hours often have plants growing six or seven feet tall, reaching for the sun, and their blooms are typically smaller than the ideal. Perhaps pinching to lessen the number of blooms per plant would help to create proper-sized flowers. Not really sure.

Although bedding dahlias can be spaced about a foot apart, the “ADS forms” we grow should be separated by two to three feet. For a plant started indoors, dig a hole, loosen the soil, mix in a handful of bonemeal, and plant just above the depth it was in its indoor container. Water it in but don't form a pool as dahlias do not like to sit in water. For a tuber, dig a hole large enough to accommodate the tuber, loosen the soil, mix in a handful of bonemeal, and place the tuber horizontally in the hole, about 3-4 inches deep. Eye should be pointing up; if can't, that's ok as the emerging sprout knows which way is up! Cover with light soil. Do not water until growth appears as tubers could rot in wet soil. It could take 2-3 weeks before sprout appears. Once plants are established water thoroughly but no pool!

At the time of planting, apply slug bait of your choice as slugs love baby dahlias (and even mature ones for that matter—one time I found a slug four feet from the ground—disgusting!) Be sure to stake near dahlia eye when planting to avoid accidentally driving a stake through the tuber if done at a later time.

Fertilize after sprouting. Hard to say what to use. I've found that ten dahlia growers will tell you 20 different things. Often cited is 5-10-10 or 10-20-20. The best advice is to have your soil tested as discussed in a previous Digest and you will know what is best for your soil and plants.

## 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:

<input type="checkbox"/>	DSO (includes husband and wife)	\$10			
<input type="checkbox"/>	DSO + ADS Individual Membership	\$34			
<input type="checkbox"/>	DSO + ADS Family Membership	\$37			

**Snowbirds: Add \$6 and enter winter address here:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Would you like to receive your Digest in digital format only?**

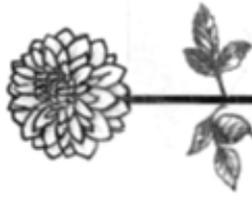
**(Be sure to include an email address above) Please circle:**

**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



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