

# DAHLIA DIGEST

## ***DAHLIA SOCIETY OF OHIO***

Since 1930

**VOL. 2010 ISSUE 4**  
**June 2010**



**Friday, June 18 Meeting**  
**7:30 p.m.**



**Busch Community Room**  
**7501 Ridge Road, Parma**  
Just south of Pleasant Valley Road

### **PROGRAM**

**7:30—8:00**

**BUSINESS MEETING including Q and A**

**8:00—8:15**

**REFRESHMENTS**

**8:15—9:45**

**RANDY FOITH -**

**WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SOIL**  
**+ SOME VIDEOS**

# President's Notes

Hi Gang,

It's June 9 and I suppose everyone is planted except for me. MaryAnn and I spent the last couple weeks in Colorado visiting our son's family and babysitting our two grandsons there—Kyle is 2, now 3, and Nick is 4. We're now home recuperating!! Can't remember us ever having that much energy when we were their age—and we certainly don't have it now!

Thanks to Ron and Dave for conducting the Midwest Auction at Elkhart June 5. Proceeds from it are given to DSO to help support the Midwest Dahlia Conference Show that we are hosting this September 10-12. Apparently many plants there went for double digits! Very much appreciated.

Keep your favorite recipes coming to MaryAnn Moreno so that we can have a fabulous Recipe Book as a favor for Midwest Show registrants this fall.

This year's Show Schedule is on our website. Check it out. In particular, look at the Court of Honor categories if you are interested in sponsoring a \$25 prize. First-come first-served.

As this Digest is going to press, I heard that Don Sopko is having a pacemaker implanted this week. If you would like to send him a card his address is:  
14740 Schreiber St. Maple Hts 44137.

Looking forward to seeing you at the June meeting.

Jerry



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



## RECIPE BOOK for Midwest Show

WE NEED YOUR FAVORITE RECIPES OF ANY TYPE—



*Desserts, Entrees, Salads, Hors d'oeuvres, Casseroles,  
etc., etc., etc.*

- Please send to MaryAnn Moreno, 8232 Westhill Drive, Chagrin Falls 44023 or email [maryannjerry@windstream.net](mailto:maryannjerry@windstream.net)

On behalf of all who enjoy eating great food

***THANKS FOR YOUR ENTRIES!***

### Dahlia Fertility Research

In what is expected to be a multi-year project, The American Dahlia Society has teamed with Penn State University and Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square PA to study dahlia nutrient requirements. The 2010 season will focus on primary nutrients, looking at a wide range of nitrogen and potassium levels to identify positive and negative effects on bloom quality, bloom quantity, and plant development. The long term goal of the project is to quantify optimal requirements and refine application timing so that dahlias can be grown to their highest potential.

## DSO Shows in 2010



August 14-15 Cuyahoga County Fair  
August 27-29 Mahoning Valley Dahlia Society  
Sept 3 Geauga County Fair  
Sept 4-5 Columbus Dahlia Society  
SEPTEMBER 10-12 MIDWEST/DSO  
Sept 18-19 East Liverpool Dahlia Society  
Sept 23-26 National in Chattanooga, Tennessee  
Sept 24-26 Pittsburgh Dahlia Society  
October 2-3 Pettiti's Oakwood

**If you can get a business or nursery to donate a door prize for the Midwest Show, (\$20-\$50 in worth, say), that would be terrific. Let Barbara Hosta, Sharon Swaney, or me know. Thanks, Jerry.**

### **OFFICERS NEEDED**

#### **1. Recording Secretary**

**DSO needs YOU to take notes so that members who can't make the meetings know what is going on in their society. Please consider being Recording Secretary. Call Jerry. Thanks.**



#### **2. Second Vice President**

**Basically, the DSO Second Vice President is in charge of making sure Dave Cap does his job in organizing the shows. Now, how hard can that be? There's no-one around more efficient than Dave! Call Jerry to volunteer. Thanks.**

## OFFICERS-CHAIRS/PHONE NUMBERS

Jerry Moreno, President.....440-543-5658  
Mike Weber, Past President.....440-647-3162  
Sharon Swaney, First Vice President, Webmaster.330-562-3296  
**Your Name, Second Vice President**.....xxx-xxx-xxxx  
Joann Bendokaitis, Treasurer.....440-543-4515  
**Your Name, Recording Secretary**.....xxx-xxx-xxxx  
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Elaine Bebenroth, Sunshine Chair.....440-237-7164  
Jerry Moreno, ADS Representative.....440-543-5658

## MEETING DATES for 2010

### Refreshments for June

Elaine Bebenroth  
Barbara Hosta  
Pat Lybarger



March 19	New Intros; Dave Cap on cuttings
April 16	Growing Dahlias DVD; Tuber Auction
May 21	Annual Plant Auction
June 18	Randy Foith on Soil; Videos
August 20	Tentative...Final Planning Midwest Show
August 22	DSO Picnic at Vuletich's; Garden tour
October 15	tba
November 19	Photo Contest; Demo on dividing/storing
December 4	Holiday Dinner Gathering

## The JUDGE's Corner

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

I was sorry to miss the last meeting. That night was Barbara and my 50th anniversary of graduation from high school. I would have preferred to go to the meeting, but ...

I need to thank Jerry for handling the distribution of the seeds at the meeting. I got an early start on the Boley seeds and got 8 to germinate. I hope you all have similar success! I will discuss judging of stellar and open-centered seedlings later, but we better start with a broader perspective on judging.

Judging in shows is different from judging seedlings in a number of ways. First, when you begin the judging of a show, you are usually able to compare the attributes of entries that are in the same class. For example, they may be all BB FD R. Usually, there are significant differences in quality among the entries. And, occasionally, it is pretty obvious which of the entries is the best. On the other hand, what would you do if one of the good entries has very good color but is top-facing and another sits at 45° but has pretty distinct fading on the top of the bloom? I hope that most of you would say something like: "Top-facing is a minor fault on an attribute that is only worth 5 points and fading can be a major fault on an attribute that is worth 20 points. Thus, unless the fading is almost invisible, the winner should be the top facing bloom—assuming, of course, that all other attributes are equal." If that is what you said, you are right! The point, of course, is that practice and skill in judging seedlings and the associated familiarity with point scoring are very important elements for successful show judging. The values of the various attributes are as follows:

Color	22
Form	28
Substance	15
Stem	10
Foliage	10
Bloom Position	5
Uniformity / Floriferousness	5
Distinction	5

It is not essential that you know each of those values, without needing to look them up, but it is essential that you have in your mind a good feel for the relative importance of form and uniformity, for example, and that you know where to find the exact values in the Classification and Handbook of Dahlias.

We have the wonderful good fortune of having a Trial Garden, sponsored by our friends in the Mahoning Valley Dahlia Society, virtually next door in Youngstown. You should certainly take advantage of that situation to do some seedling judging there when you have the opportunity to do so. I do! We will also work with Harriet Chandler, the new Trial Garden

Director, and the MVDS to develop opportunities to judge in the garden as a group. There are specific requirements for



judging seedlings in order to make the steps from Candidate to Accredited and from Accredited to Senior judge. While the Trial Garden and the Seedling Bench Evaluation at our shows are ideal times to work on those requirements, we can also arrange other approaches to meet those needs. Let me know if you would like to pursue these alternative approaches.

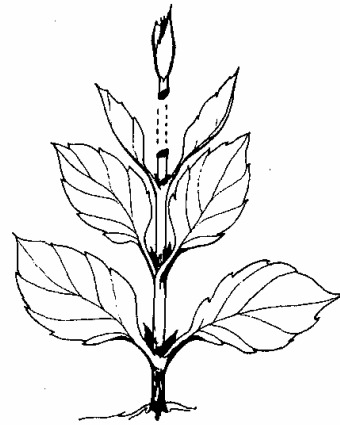
This year is an excellent one to start or to move up from the Candidate Judging level. Having the Midwest Show here in Cleveland will make it very easy to interact with judges from across the country. Exposure to a broad range of perspectives is an important element of your judging experience.

I also think the two seedling events and the associated judging seminar will make the show at Petitti's as much fun as our Midwest Show! Plan on joining in the fun of growing some seedlings with great potential!

## TOPPING, DISBRANCHING

So far, we've talked about taking cuttings, preparing soil, learning about pH, and planting dahlias. Let's discuss what should be done as the plant grows to produce the best possible blooms.

**TOPPING** is used to force a plant to produce multiple laterals (side branches). To "top" a plant, you pinch off the growing tip of the plant after a certain number of pairs of leaves are produced. If there are two pairs of leaves, four laterals should grow. Three pairs produce six laterals, etc. But be sure to see actual laterals growing before topping.



Number of laterals often quoted are three or four for AA or A; six laterals for B; eight for BB; eight to ten laterals for the rest. So, for example, two pairs of leaves should produce four laterals. But four sets of leaves that produce eight laterals could be reduced to four laterals by pinching off four laterals; see the next topic on Disbranching.

Also, one might let one or two extra pairs of leaves grow before topping for security purposes in case laterals don't grow. What is supposed to happen doesn't always happen. But once the laterals are clearly established, be sure to remove laterals to achieve the suggested numbers,

Each set of leaves should generate two laterals, and each lateral should produce one bloom in the first round of



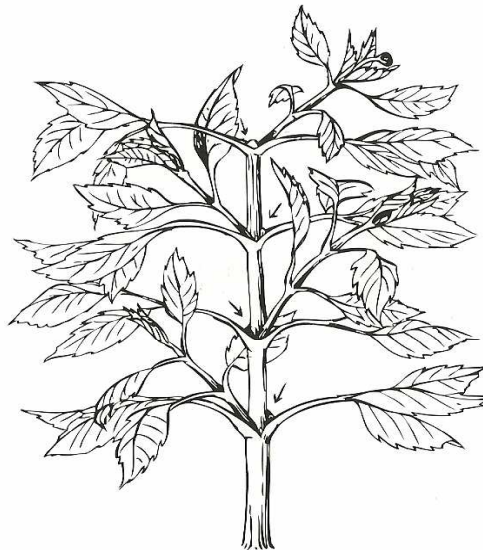
flowers. After the first set of blooms are cut, replacement laterals will start growing. These replacement laterals will produce later blooms.

If when you top, there is a visible hole in the stalk, be sure to cover it with tape or foil so to prevent water from entering the stalk as it is hollow. Such water will start to rot the stalk and eventually the roots.

**DISBRANCHING** means removing some of the laterals (branches) to concentrate all of the growing energy into the remaining blooms in order to maximize their size.

As we have mentioned in a previous article, removing the lower leaves of a plant will improve air circulation around the plant to minimize the potential for mildew and other diseases; it can be done when disbranching is done.

The diagram shows four sets of leaves with one lateral removed and one remained for each set of leaves, four laterals. Note how the laterals were removed to balance the plant.



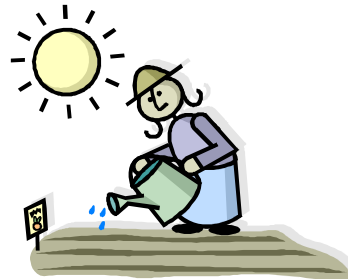


**PICNIC**  
**SUNDAY, AUGUST 22**  
at  
**STAN and LINDA VULETICHs**  
with opportunity to visit  
**Randy and Kathy Foiths garden**  
as well as chance to visit the  
**ADS Trial Garden maintained by the**  
**Mahoning Valley Dahlia Society**

**Details will be given in the July Digest.**

## **WATERING and FERTILIZING**

Young dahlia plants do not need a lot of water; in fact, excessive water can lead to rotting of the plant. For larger plants, a good rule of thumb is to water if the rainfall is less than one inch in seven days. Pots require more regular watering.



The best strategy for **fertilizing** is to begin with a soil test to determine pH and the specific soil needs. Lacking that information, the plants will generally benefit from regular treatments with a water soluble or granular fertilizer. Traditional wisdom for dahlias is to treat with a high nitrogen fertilizer through the middle of the season but minimize nitrogen at the end of the season.

HELP! HELP! HELP!


One of the downsides of introducing cultivars and naming them after your family is that you feel particularly bad when you lose them! If you have **Baron Chris** or **Waiva Miner**, please save some tubers for me when you dig at the end of the season. I will buy or trade them for others that I have managed to keep! Thanks.

Ron Miner, [baronminer@aol.com](mailto:baronminer@aol.com)

*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:

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