

## The JUDGE's Corner

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The Smokey the Bear campaign to reduce virus in dahlias may be better served by a more relevant logo. I'm going to call the logo at the right "Hanu says!" I hope you did throw out those virused plants at the end of the season. As you probably know, the Directors of the Midwest Dahlia Conference, under the leadership of our own Randy Foith, agreed to take up the cause to promote the destruction of tubers from virused plants. I'm convinced that with Dr. Pappu's guidance, we can begin the process of 'rooting virus out' of our gardens. Wouldn't it be great to be confident that those special and costly tubers we buy at our auctions will not come up with virus!? Not all dahlias have virus but we need to get rid of those that are suspect. I want to thank Randy and the Midwest Directors for their adoption of the strategy!

We are in the process of finalizing the classification of the new dahlias to be introduced in 2015. In principle, that would seem to be a pretty straightforward process. Simply take the classification determined in the Trial Garden or on the Seedling Bench Evaluation (SBE) and send it to Lou Paradise to put in the Classification and Handbook of Dahlias. Right?

The example at the right is an excellent example of how easy the process can be. The originator of the cultivar is Kristine Albrecht. It is her first one and it is named KA's Cloud. It was entered in all of our official Trial Gardens and was put up for SBE at least four

**PLEASE!**



**You can help root out  
Virus**



times. In those eleven evaluations, it was classified as Informal Decorative every time! Easy! For size, it was classified as an AA four times, as an A six times, and as a B once. Fairly easy again. It will be an A. It was classified as White seven times and as a Light Blend four times. It has a lavender blush. The bottom line was A ID WH2. The whites actually ranged from WH1 to WH9, but there was a plurality of WH2. Watch for this cultivar; it promises to be a real winner!

At the other end of the scale, there are some new cultivars that have a combination of scores and classifications that are not so easily resolved. This Collarette is NTAC Debbie. It scored in

five Trial Gardens plus twice on the Seedling Bench, including at the National Show in Tacoma. The good news is that it was identified as CO each time. The bad news was that no two teams reached the same conclusion on color. Two classified the color as BR, two as OR, and three as LB. Only three of the TGs included the petaloid color, two as a light blend and one as a dark blend.

I hope that each of our DSO judges is now prepared to capture the color of this entry in writing! We went through the process at the last judging seminar and I discussed it extensively in last month's column. You begin with the colors on the ray florets. Let's just pretend that we can do it with a picture. The dominant ray floret color comes first. Roger Walker, who manages the compilation of the SBE results and I (TG results) had to pick among OR, YL, and BR for that dominant color. There were 4 OR, 2 BR, and 1 YL, so we ended up with OR13 as the dominant color on the



face of the ray florets. You could now go to the CHD and discover that if the dominant color is OR13, the blend is going to be a dark blend, DB. The secondary color on the face of the ray florets is a little hard to see. The enlargement at the right might help. You can see that the bases of the ray florets are yellow. We chose YL19 from among the colors provided by the Trial Gardens. Ok, so far we have CO DB OR13/YL19. I'm sure you know that the color of the petaloids is next! The picture fails us here. We can see at least a couple colors, but identifying them without the actual flower just can't be done. The TGs reported or, yl, and lv; we ended up with CO DB OR13/YL19 / lb or10/yl18 based on the TG inputs, feedback from the originator, and close examination of the pictures we had available.



Quite frankly, Roger and I were disappointed that some of the reports did not include petaloid colors. That fact will lead to some modification of the score sheets for next year. We hope to make it more clear that, for example, face color should be reported on Orchids and petaloid colors should be reported on Collarettes. That is one problem I don't think our DSO judges would have!

In that context, I hope that you will go to the DSO website and take another look at the 'Open-Centered Classification Quiz' Sharon will have posted there. Here are two examples. The one



on the left is relatively easy once you reach the conclusion that you have both involute ray florets like an Orchid and petaloids like a Collarette. Those are the basic characteristics of our newest open-centered form, the Orchette (OT). All of the colors are simply white, so the classification of that seedling would be OT W/w-w.

I'll help you out with the one on the right. It would be easy to miss, in the picture, the fact that the disc florets are tubular! Since it isn't very obvious, you may just have to trust me on that. Tubular disc florets are characteristic of which group of open-centered cultivars? Yup, Anemones. This guy doesn't look much like an AN, does he? That is partly due to the fact that the dome is not very well developed, at least not yet. There is another bigger problem with calling it an Anemone, isn't there! How many AN do you know that have petaloids like a Collarette? Yeah, me too – none. In my opinion, it makes this seedling a Novelty Open, NO. Lou Paradise and his Classification Committee have not generated a way to describe the secondary colors of an NO, at least in part because there are no 'standard' elements of an NO. If we were to translate the OT approach to this particular NO, we could come up with NO V DP/DR/yl - v dp/dr where the color of the petaloids comes last, after the hyphen. There is no standard approach for the colors in NO cultivars and this guy would probably be just NO V DP/DR. Enjoy the quiz!

Feedback gathered at the last DSO meeting leads me to conclude that we should carry on with the seedling challenges / judging seminars at the Petitti's show. My thinking at the moment is to roll the original Blossom Gulch challenge over into the regular show for 2015, but then to bring it back into the judging seminar in 2016 when we should have a lot of seedlings ready to be put up on the Seedling Bench (and also into the Trial Gardens)!

For the 2015 seedling challenge we will go two directions: one based on Fully Double seed parents and one based on Open-Centered seed parents. I gathered a ton of seeds from Baron Aunt Dorothy, Baron Kathy, and the Blossom Gulch seedlings for the latter contest. I also have quite a few seeds from fully double seed parents that were isolated from the Open-Centered cultivars. Stay tuned!

*Ron*