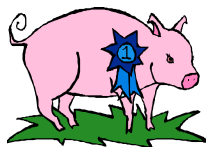


DAHLIA DIGEST

DAHLIA SOCIETY OF OHIO

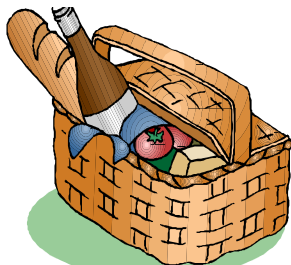
Since 1930

VOL. 2011 ISSUE 5
August 2011



**Cuyahoga County Fair
Show
August 13-14**

JUDGING SEMINAR with RON MINER
followed by judging in the Trial Garden
Wednesday September 7 Seminar at 1:00
Davis Center, Fellows Riverside Gardens
123 McKinley Ave. Youngstown 44509



PICNIC
SEPTEMBER 18

President's Notes

Hi Gang,

MaryAnn and I lived in England for a couple years back in the '60's. We learned very quickly that every conversation with English-folk began with talking about the weather. Perhaps the same is true of dahlia-folk. So, how much more chaotic can the weather be? Drenching rains and cold weather through May and into June followed by a drought with temperatures in the 90's and currently hot, humid, and damaging thunderstorms have my dahlias super stressed-out. What's with that?! Dear Mother Nature, please give my dahlias a break—how about three days of low-80's and sunny skies, followed by a gentle inch or so of rain, and only beneficial bugs to entertain them? OK, that said, I feel better although such ranting hasn't changed the reality of my garden. So be it. (Yikes! Just got hit with a hail storm showering golf-size hail-stones on Magic Moment!)

Do you recall our June program? While entertaining us, Deborah Davis showed us how to create a container garden. I hope to see several such entries at our ParmaTown show in September. There will be a Court of Honor award for the best one so seriously consider entering.

When you think of a county fair, what do you think of? Rides and tractor-pulls and demolition derbies and greasy food, and dreams of winning blue ribbons for your prize bull or quilt or pie or squash or honey or calligraphy or ceramic or doll or photograph or flower—and you guessed it, especially proudly taking home a blue ribbon for the BEST DAHLIA! What feeling could possibly be better than that? So, Come One and Come All to the Cuyahoga County Fair and bring your dahlias along, Saturday morning August 13 from 7:30—10:00. See you there. Hope you win!

Jerry



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

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Jerry Moreno, ADS Representative..... 440-543-5658

MEETING DATES for 2011

March 18 **New Introductions; ‘Tufa’ revisited**
April 15 **Tuber auction**
May 20 **Plant auction**
June 17 **Container gardening**
September 18 **Picnic Ron and Barbara Miner**



October 21 **To be determined**
November 18 **Photo contest ++**
December TBA **Holiday get-together**

TIDBITS

1.



Green Corps is a work/study program founded by the Cleveland Botanical Garden in 1996. High school students earn as they learn transforming vacant lots in

the Cleveland area into flourishing urban farms. See the Botanical website for information regarding their First Annual Green Corp Garden Tour August 27 10am-1pm. DSO is an affiliate of the Cleveland Botanical Garden.

2. Bugged by **Japanese Beetles**? You and me both. Hand pick and drown in soapy water. Spray with insecticidal soap but they need to be coated and your plants may not like to be so soaked. Collect them, blend with some water, strain the slurry and use the liquid as a spray. Be careful with insecticides, e.g., Sevin, it works but kills good bugs, too. Bring on the starlings—they like the adults and their grub-babies in your lawn. The traps are terrific but don't put them in your yard, convince your neighbors that traps are must-haves for them!

3. **Ron MacDonald** now resides at the Holly Hill Nursing Home at 10190 Fairmount Road, Newbury 44065. I'm sure he would enjoy a card of good wishes from his dahlia friends.

4. **Ron Miner** will be holding the first of three **JUDGING SEMINARS Wednesday, September 7, 1:00 pm** at the Davis Visitors and Education Center, Fellows Riverside Gardens, Youngstown. After the seminar we can judge in the ADS Trial Garden located there.

5. **DSO PICNIC SEPTEMBER 18, 1:00.**
at **Ron and Barbara Miner's.**
8431 Tulip Lane
Bainbridge Twp. 44023
440-543-1516



Please bring a dish to share, a lawn chair, and your judging book for the judging seminar.
DSO will provide tableware, meat entrée, and drinks.

Dahlia Shows in 2011

August 13 Cuyahoga County Fair

A wonderful opportunity to get involved in showing, especially for first-timers. Set-up Sat morn from 7:30 a.m. to 10 a.m.. Park in the Flower Barn lot. Call Dave 440-888-5589 or Jerry for details. \$12 registration fee is payable at the Fair; it is reimbursed to you by DSO thereafter.



August 18-22 National Show San Francisco

August 26-28 Mahoning Valley Dahlia Society

Set-up Fri 4:00-10:00; Sat morn 6:00-9:30.
Details from Randy or Kathy Foith 330-584-9002

Sept 2 Geauga County Fair

Must pre-register by AUGUST 10
See www.geaugafair.com
Set-up Friday night 4:00—9:00



Sept 2-4 Columbus Dahlia Society

Sept 9-11 81st DSO Show Parmatown Mall

Set-up Friday 9:00 p.m. to Sat 9:30 a.m.
DSO Flower of the Year— Magic Moment



Sept 10-11 Pittsburgh Dahlia Society

Sept 23-25 Midwest Chicago Botanical

Details at <http://2011show.dahlias.info/home/event-information>

Sept 16-17 East Liverpool Dahlia Society

October 1-2 DSO Member Show

Pettiti's Oakwood Set-up Sat morn 8:00-10:30 a.m.
Judging Seminar



The JUDGE's Corner

Ron Miner - baronminer@aol.com

Last month we discussed the determination of a seedling's form. The key elements of the successful classification of a seedling are careful examination of the shape of the ray florets, determination of the distribution of the florets on the bloom, and careful reading of the definitions of ideal forms in the CHD (American Dahlia Society *Classification and Handbook of Dahlias*). Piece of cake, eh?!

Once we've determined the form, we need to talk about evaluating it. Form's 28 points are divided into 5 areas of evaluation: symmetry, contour, development, true form, and size proportion. First, let's take a look at some form faults.

Form—28

Symmetry - 5
Contour - 5
Development - 5
True Form - 5
Size Proportion - 8

Symmetry involves the overall appearance of the blooms (are they round?) and the nature of the centers of the bloom (are they round?). The bloom on the right illustrates a fault common to large blooms. Bearding is a fault where the florets on the bottom half of the bloom are longer than the florets in the top half. A penalty of 1 point (out of 5) for this observation of bearding yields a failing score for symmetry (80%). Note, however, that the center is round. So, a total penalty of about 1 point is probably appropriate.



Can you spot the symmetry problem on this bicolor? Right, that center sure isn't round! This bull nose is a pretty extreme example of a fairly common problem. Here again, this bloom should not achieve a passing score for symmetry with 60% more appropriate than 80% in this case.





This Single form bloom illustrates another basic symmetry problem. It is simply not round. I would rank the symmetry problem on this entry as the worst and the bull nose second worst among the three examples.

Contour is the second element of form and involves the way in which the ray florets combine to make the bloom. Take another look at the bicolor on the previous page. From this angle, the gaps at 6 and 11 o'clock are pretty glaring, aren't they! The ray florets are not uniformly distributed around the bloom.

Next, compare the contour of the right and left sides of this white Water Lily (WL) seedling. In addition to the gaps at 7 and 9 o'clock, the left side of the bloom has fewer florets than the right. The contour problems on this WL are severe enough that a score of 50% (-2.5 point penalty) may even be generous.



Development is a key issue in judging seedlings on the bench at a show. It also carries over to show judging in general. The judging manual states: "The judge must remember that the mature bloom at the peak of development with some faults merits first choice over an immature "clean" bloom." Violation of this principle, in my opinion, is one of the most common errors in show judging. You must take great care to avoid picking that "clean," but young(!) bloom over its fully mature competition. In a Trial Garden setting however, you need to work with the blooms available and development isn't an issue.

True form addresses the question of how closely the ray florets and their arrangement conform to the ideal definition in the CHD. This pink FD seedling has florets that are not involute enough to make it a Ba, but they are also not “generally flat,” as stated in the FD definition. This seedling probably deserves a failing score for true form; i.e., a penalty of 1 or 1.5 points.



Ideal size proportion is specifically cited in each of the ideal definitions in the CHD. When you are evaluating a seedling, measurement of depth and diameter are key parts of its classification. Shallow blooms are the more common problem, like the seedling on the right, but some blooms, like this beautiful Hy Mom



below, have depth greater than the diameter. Both are faults; but, in my view, the shallow bloom has a substantially greater fault than the great depth shown in this Hy Mom.

Remember that one of the requirements to become a judge is to bring blooms to a show. The Cuyahoga Fair is a great place to start! There will be lots of help available to help you to get started.

DSO Business Meeting Notes June 20, 2011

Call to Order/ Welcome/Announcements

Jerry Moreno called the meeting to order at 7:30. He reminded members that Magic Moment is the flower of the year. He reported that Ron Miner and he were privileged to ride in Dave Cap's "dahliamobile" to attend the Midwest Dahlia Conference business meeting and auction in Elkhart, Indiana June 4.

Treasurer's Report

Joann Bendokaitis, Treasurer, reported that the DSO's money market account remains healthy. Please see Joann for details.

Membership and Corresponding Secretary Report

John Bendokaitis and MaryAnn Moreno reported that there are currently 85 paid members in DSO.

DSO Website

Webmaster, Sharon Swaney, requested that members send in photos to be displayed on the DSO website. Members should submit their email addresses to her if they are not currently on the DSO email distribution list and would like to be.

Programs, Picnic and Holiday Gatherings

Sharon announced that the Miners have volunteered to host our picnic at their home on Sunday, September 18. Ron will offer a judging seminar there. Members are asked to bring a side dish and lawn chairs. A reminder will be mailed to members in advance.

The Holiday Gathering is still being planned for the first Saturday in December. Sharon is currently reviewing survey results in which she asked members for preference of location, cost and dining options. Currently the organization is exploring the possibility of having some sort of event at the Botanical Gardens.

Dahlia Shows

Dave Cap reviewed the list of 2011 Dahlia Shows and encouraged DSO member participation. The first show will be held at the Cuyahoga County Fair August 13. Members who are showing dahlias should enter at the Flower Barn entrance on Eastland Road. This show is a great one especially for beginnings to show. Registration may be done online or on site at the show. Please try to participate as the County Fair gives DSO money to put on a show. DSO reimburses all dahlia entrants the registration fee.

Judging Seminars

Ron Miner is planning 3 judging seminars this summer. The first will be held at the Youngstown Trial Garden but the date is yet to be determined. The second seminar will be held at the DSO picnic

In September, and the third judging seminar will be at our Pettiti's Oakwood show in October. He encouraged members to submit their judge's tests to him with the reminder that judges must be re-certified every five years.

Trial Garden

Stan Vuletich reported that the Trial Garden has been planted with approximately 18-20 new introductions. Members are encouraged to view the TG which is located at the Fellows Riverside Garden, 123 McKinley Avenue, Youngstown 44509.

New Business

Mike Weber moved and Ron Miner seconded that DSO reimburse Tom Demaline of the Willoway Nursery \$519 for the 519 plants we grew with the use of his greenhouse and supplies (e.g., soil, growing cubes, misting system). The motion passed without objection. Jerry mentioned that we are very fortunate in having Tom's facilities available for us to use as we would have no other means of growing plants for our spring auctions.

Open discussion / Q&A

Question 1: When should individual's pinch out the center of their dahlias?

Answer: A good resource to find this answer is online at dahlia.net. Member's opinions varied but some mentioned that on AA dahlias to pinch after 2, 3, or 4 leaves tall from the ground. For BB dahlias some members wait until 6 leaves tall to pinch. A general rule of thumb is to pinch back between 4 to 5 leaves tall. After pinching out the center, it's the number of laterals that is important in growing show quality blooms. Check the website for advice but generally AA's should have around 3 or so laterals with the number increasing as the size decreases, BB's should have around 8 laterals.

Refreshments

DSO thanked Maureen Nowak, Marilyn Weber, and Emily Halderman for having provided refreshments.

Adjournment

The business meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Program—Container Gardening by Deborah Davis

Deborah had worked as a horticulturist for Sea World for 17 years and had lots of tips to share with us regarding container gardening. 1) You get what you pay for in a container. Cheap containers could last only a year if left out in winter. The cold winters could cause flimsy containers to crack, so more expensive, better made containers are recommended and could last for years.

- 2) For large containers, it is not necessary to fill the entire container with soil. To do so could be costly and add additional weight to the container. Instead, fill the bottom of container with bubble wrap and empty yogurt or other plastic containers with their lids on.
- 3) Add a soilless mix. Miracle Grow is less ideal because it is fine and dusty. The peat moss in Miracle Grow does not soak up water and does not always keep the plant hydrated. Deborah recommends Pro-Mix as an excellent starting Mix and also, Fafard.
- 4) Add "Sweet Peet" and mix in the container. This can be used for a mulch or an amendment. It has 4 ingredients including horse bedding. Regular peat moss is acidic. Some clay from your garden could be added.
- 5) Next, add water being sure the mix is uniformly wet.
- 6) Instead of "Sweet Peet," could also use "Soil Magic." Do not use both, just use one or the other. Soil Magic is compost from the Akron sewage treatment plant.
- 7) After your container garden is planted, the first three times it is watered, it should be watered very heavily.
- 8) For deep containers, could get a piece of pvc piping and drill holes in it. Place a cap at the bottom of the pipe and place the pipe in the middle of the container with the cap side at the bottom. Fill the tube with gravel, then direct the hose into the top of the pipe when watering the container. This helps root bound plants thrive.

Other Tips

Use "Plant Tone" for fertilizer after you plant. Use this two times a season; sprinkle it into the container. Keep the nitrogen level down.

Use "Bulb Tone" fertilizer for dahlias. Deborah does not recommend "Osmocote."

Do not ONLY use garden soil in a container.

If plant perennials in container, can mulch over in the winter.

When plant, always "tickle" the roots before placing plant into container. Separate the roots. If the roots are real solid, take a knife and cut the bottom of the roots off (e.g., last 1/4 inch) or cut slices along the outside of the root ball.

When planting push the roots down hard into the mix.

When planting, combine different color, form and textures of plants.

Water plants before removing from the pots and before you place into the container.

It is okay to mash and cram all of the plants together.

Only use a "breaker head" hose to water your plants. No hard spray.

When working in your garden in the ground, Deborah does not recommend the Mantis Tiller. The blade moves so fast that it grinds the soil into a powder and the soil can turn into cement.

Emily Halderman, Recording Secretary

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