

DAHLIA DIGEST

DAHLIA SOCIETY OF OHIO

Since 1930

VOL. 2011 ISSUE 4
June 2011



Friday, June 17 Meeting
7:30 p.m.

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



**CONTAINER-
GARDENING**

**DEBORAH
DAVIS**

President's Notes

Hi Gang,

Finally the weather has turned to the better hopefully allowing us to get our garden areas tilled. Now no doubt we'll go through a drought! But whoever said Mother Nature was fair.

Ron and I had the pleasure of riding in Dave's Dahliamobile to attend the Midwest Dahlia Conference annual meeting and auction June 4. Randy and Kathy attended as well. Some of us need our heads examined as we already have more plants than we can handle yet wound up purchasing more!



Oh well, it is for a good cause as proceeds go to the host of the Midwest Show; this year it's the Central States DS in the Chicago area. Hopefully you will be able to attend their show. It looks to be a spectacular setting. Information including the registration form and show schedule may be found at

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

The show is late this year, September 24-25 (set-up starting at 5:00 pm on the 23rd) so if you are delaying planting because your soil is too wet, you may have prime blooms in time for the Midwest Show! By the way, the program at the Midwest meeting was by Howard Russell, Michigan State U entomologist on beneficial insects for the garden. He was very entertaining and incredibly knowledgeable about bugs. If you have any questions on the subject email him at bugman@msu.edu.

Hope to see you June 17 to answer your questions on dahlia culture and to learn all about container gardening from a very entertaining presenter, Deborah Davis.

Jerry



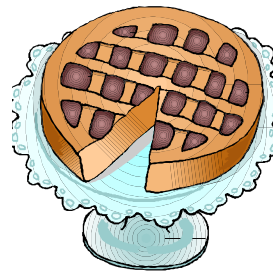
**VISIT YOUR DSO WEBSITE
SHARON SWANEY, WEBMASTER
WWW.DAHLIASOCIETYOFOHIO.ORG**

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Refreshments:

**Emily Halderman
Maureen Nowak
Marilyn Weber**



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
November 18 Photo contest ++
December TBA Holiday get-together

Supporting Dahlias
A NO Stake NO Tie System
Don McAllister, Colorado DS
<http://dahlias.net/dahwebpg/Support/NoStake.htm>

Many people find staking and tying dahlias to be a tedious task with a rather unsightly outcome. I number myself among these and over the years have developed a dahlia support system which requires no stakes, no ties and is nearly invisible when the dahlia plant reaches maturity.

The heart of this system is the common tomato or plant cage. With a couple of simple modifications these cages are altered to provide a vastly improved capacity to support large plants such as dahlias, cleomes, delphiniums, yarrow, hibiscus, tithonia and even top heavy tomatoes. In our own yard we also use various sizes of these converted cages to support mums, marigolds, fall asters and any other plant which might flop over in a heavy rain or strong wind.

For dahlias, I prefer to use what is commonly sold as a 42" plant cage with four rings and four legs. The distance from the bottom ring to the top ring is about 27" with an overall cage height of 42". The diameters of the rings themselves are 8, 10, 12, and 14 inches.

The first step in modifying the plant cages is to cut the legs off above the small ring. I use an inexpensive 8" mini bolt cutter for this purpose, and generally pump twice in severing each leg.



The second step of the modification process is to bend a hook into one end of these severed legs. The legless cage is now installed and centered over a dahlia plant and any associated drip or soak irrigation with the LARGE ring on the soil surface. The large footprint associated with having the large ring on the soil surface and the plant growing through the small ring at the top, act together to change the plant cage from a wobbling, top heavy ice cream cone into a mechanically sound. The modified legs are driven into the soil with the hooked ends gripping the large ring and holding it firmly to the soil surface. The modified legs should be inserted at an angle to resist the lifting forces from strong winds.

Finally, an identification tag is attached to the top ring on the installed cage where it provides easy visibility to grower or visitor alike. The tag is attached using plastic coated twist ties cut long enough so they can be transferred directly to the toot clump when it is dug in the fall. Special Note: A hay hook or long handled meat hook is very helpful to pull the hook ended legs from the ground. The long handle really helps the back.

Another very interesting way to support dahlias using guy wires is by Ben Lawrence. Check it out complete with pictures at http://dahlias.net/dahwebpg/Support/GuyWire_1.htm

JUNE PROGRAM

CONTAINER GARDENING

by

DEBORAH DAVIS

Deb's experience in art and horticulture gives her a special ability for container design. At the June meeting, she will share her knowledge, techniques and tips in her fun, zany manner. You're sure to leave with inspiration for doing some container gardening of your own.

Take lots of notes and enter your design in our DSO September show. Who knows, you may win the Court of Honor prize of \$25. Best of luck.



The JUDGE's Corner

Ron Miner baronminer@aol.com

The determination and the evaluation of a seedling's form are almost certainly the most important steps in the process of scoring a seedling. First, determination of the best classification of the cultivar fundamentally affects how it will compete and, in some cases, whether it will achieve a passing score. Second, form is worth 28 percent of the score and a poor score for form will likely lead to a score under the required 85 percent.

This red seedling (like most seedlings you will encounter!) requires close and careful study to identify its best classification. Start at the equator of the bloom. What is the shape of the floret? Perhaps you will first notice that



many of their tips are revolute; that is, they curve to the back of the floret. Perhaps you will also notice that they are not flat in cross-section. If you were to pluck some and cut them in half, the cross-section would be curved and in some cases, even 'w' shaped. What do you notice about the arrangement of the florets on the bloom? Are they disciplined and regular or unruly and irregular? For the most part, the arrangement is irregular.

If you were now standing in the Trial Garden, discussing the classification of this entry with your team, you would probably have your Classification and Handbook of Dahlias in your hand checking on several definitions. I hope you are all now thinking 'Ah, yes, ID or SC?!' The question might be whether those slightly revolute tips are enough to qualify this seedling as SC. The

answer is 'no!' The ideal SC cultivar has florets that are involute for about half their length and fully involute (i.e., overlapping) for about one fourth their length. Further, that ideal SC cultivar has florets that are regular in arrangement and the ideal ID cultivar can have fully involute floret tips. Your conclusion, then, would be that this cultivar is informal decorative.

This orange seedling brings to mind a different pair of forms since the ray florets are partially involute. If they were flat, there would



be no question; the seedling would be formal decorative, FD. Note, however, that the florets are involute; i.e., they roll upward toward the top of the floret. You should, therefore, take another look at the definition of a ball. Note in the definition that an ideal BA would have florets that are

fully involute (i.e., overlap) for more than half their length. Clearly this seedling does not have florets that are sufficiently involute to overlap. Thus, you and your team correctly conclude that this seedling is FD.

Open-centered cultivars are easy, right? This one was entered on the seedling bench by Roland Verrone at the National Show last fall. Your first reaction, like mine, is probably that this is an orchid. Just look at those involute ray florets. Before we write O W/w in the classification and go ahead to

look for faults, take another, closer look at those ray florets. What the heck are those petaloids doing there?! Orchids don't have petaloids; this must be a col-larette! Actually there were two cultivars with this form entered at the show. They are Novelty, Open Centered cultivars commonly called



Orchettes. Roland named this one Verrone's Morning Star. It scored 85.15 at the National Show in Chattanooga.

Keep working on those judging tests! Thanks!

Dahlia Shows in 2011

August 13-14 Cuyahoga County Fair

A wonderful opportunity to get involved in showing, especially for first-timers. Set-up Sat morn from 7:00 a.m. to 10 a.m.. Park in Flower Barn lot. Call Dave 440-888-5589 or Jerry for details.

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 330-584-9002

Sept 2 Geauga County Fair

Must pre-register. 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.dahlia.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.



**Whence
Come
the
Barons**

DSO Business Meeting Notes May 20, 2011

Call to Order/ Welcome/Announcements

Jerry Moreno called the meeting to order at 7:35. DSO members will be attending the Annual Dahlia Midwest conference in Elkhart, Indiana on June 4th. Details of the event can be found at: <http://www.midwestdahliaconference.org/>. Members interested in attending should contact Jerry, Dave Cap, or Ron Miner. The meeting minutes for April were approved.

Treasurer's Report

Joann Bendokaitis, Treasurer, reports that the DSO's money market account remains healthy and has increased due to dahlia sales early in the month. Please see Joann for details.

Membership and Corresponding Secretary Report

There are currently 79 paid members of the Dahlia Society of Ohio. May Digests were sent to them.

Cleveland Botanical Garden Report

The Cleveland Botanical Gardens quarterly bulletin was shared with the group. Additional information for the Cleveland Botanical Garden can be found at: www.cb garden.org/visit/gardens.html

DSO Website

Webmaster, Sharon Swaney, requests 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. Sharon has coordinated that a garden expert speak at the next DSO meeting. She is also coordinating the DSO picnic/outing this summer and had distributed a survey requesting suggestions from members that she will report at the next meeting.

Holden Arboretum and Rockefeller Greenhouse Sales Report

Dave Cap reported that the DSO earned \$612 from our plant sales at Rockefeller Greenhouse and \$751 from our sales at the Holden Arboretum. About 30 plants have been set aside to donate to the Midwest Dahlia Conference auction. Also, about the same number will be donated to the Cleveland Botanical Garden Educational House. If members have any stakes they can donate for the Cleveland Botanical Garden project, please contact Dave.

Old Business

Several sizes of the DSO polo shirts were shown along with the logo and color choice options. The price of the shirts are \$26.69. A special thanks to Linda & Stan Vuletich who chose the shirt logo and to Sharon who identified the vendor.

Ron Miner reported that members wishing to renew their accreditation for judging must take the judges test. The test can be found on the ADS website. Jerry distributed hard copies. Please return the completed tests to Ron as soon as possible.

Ron will host two judging seminars in September. The seeds he had distributed earlier in the year successfully germinated for some people, but not for others. Ron distributed additional "fully double" seed packets to potential judge candidates.

New Business

Randy Foith's term as DSO representative to the Midwest Dahlia Conference expires this year. There were no nominations from the floor. Previously Jerry had asked Randy if he would be interested in running again. He agreed. His nomination and election were approved without objection. Thanks Randy.

Doc Hemminger moved and Ron Miner seconded that DSO pay Dave Cap \$125 for expenses incurred (e.g., mileage) in the Willoway propagation project and the sales projects at Rockefeller and Holden. The motion passed without objection. DSO is very thankful for all the time Dave spends on its behalf.

Open discussion / Q&A

Question 1: What is the ideal amount of time to "harden" plants grown indoors before planting in the ground?

Answer: A week is the recommended period of time to harden a plant.

Question 2: Will dahlias bloom indoors?

Answer: Dahlias grown indoors will need a light source. Members are not confident they will bloom near a window and believe that they would need artificial light.

Question 3: Is there a way to maintain the height of dahlias so it doesn't grow as tall?

Answer: Dahlias growing in partial shade will grow taller than those growing in full sun.

Question 3: What type of "food" is recommended for dahlias?

Answer: DSO members responded with their opinions below:

- Place a fertilizer of 12 12 12 when cultivate, then provide a fertilizer of 5 10 10 each month (rose fertilizer is close to the 5 10 10 mixture)
- Manure tea

- Some members do not provide additional nutrients to their plan
- Miracle Gro
- Foliage spray is overrated
- One individual uses nitrogen weekly or every other week.
- Read articles on the ADS website.
- Some people run into trouble with too much phosphorous so consider using more nitrogen.
- When fertilizing, error on the light side. You do not want to over fertilize.

Refreshments

Refreshments were provided by Shannon Fee, Donna Mattmuller, Sharon Swaney and Marilyn Weber. Thank you!

Adjournment

The business meeting adjourned at 8:15.

Annual Plant Auction

The Plant Auction provided much entertainment for everyone. Opening bids started at \$2.00 and everyone seemed to walk away with plants of their choice. Thanks to Doc Hemminger and Dave Cap for running the auction.

Respectfully submitted. Emily Halderman



QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH

- 1) What DSO member loves red boots?**
- 2) What is the oldest surviving hybrid dahlia dating back to 1882?**

DAHLIA SOCIETY of OHIO
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