



# THE PNDC DAHLIA TIMES

WINTER 2018

Newsletter of the Pacific Northwest Dahlia Conference

[www.pnecdahlia.com](http://www.pnecdahlia.com)

## A Winter Message

by Larry Smith, President-elect

We in the PNDC are to be congratulated for a good year of growing and showing. At the time of this writing, many have reported that they have wrapped up that arduous process of digging/dividing/storage. I call it "The Most Odious Task of the year." Not my favorite thing, obviously, but must be done in order to share tubers with others, earn funds for club treasuries, and to start our own gardens next year. Some varieties we will carry forward, others that are no longer suiting our needs will be parted with to make room for different cultivars.

The PNDC itself will be going through a similar process, beginning in 2019. The newly elected Executive Committee will be looking at all of the activities the PNDC has been doing and considering changes and additions that will benefit all members.

In an effort to better serve all member Societies, the five member Executive Committee now consists of at least one representative from four of the six PNDC Societies and an advisory rep from one of the other clubs. We will be formulating ideas and seeking member input throughout this process.

There should be several items to put before the membership at the Spring PNDC meeting, which will occur March 23 in the Portland area. We are also talking about adding some valuable, educational dahlia activities to our program. Stay tuned for information about the meeting date and location as well, as the agenda..

The Canby Trial Garden committee would like to thank those who made the effort to judge the cultivars this year. We sent a 14 passenger "party van" out to the garden on the Sunday of our show weekend, filled with judges from Lane County, Douglas County, Wild Rivers, and the Federation. A large carload from Lane County also came up to our September meeting at Swan Island Dahlia Farm to judge the entries and enjoy the potluck with the Portland members. Judging was wrapped up by mid September. The top scoring entry was "My Hero," a flashy spawn of Nick Sr., introduced by Nicholas Gitts.

The PNDC will be the best it can be only with member input. YOU are the PNDC! If you have suggestions on how we can make it better, please contact me at "thebodysmith@hotmail.com."

## Keep in Touch! Be a Member of ADS

The American Dahlia Society operates on a calendar year basis. The membership year extends from January 1 through December 31 regardless of when you pay your dues. All ADS members receive 4 issues of the Bulletin of the American Dahlia Society (March, June, September, and December).

All NEW and renewing ADS members will receive the current year's Classification and Handbook of Dahlias with their December ADS Bulletin. A Family Membership offers 2 people, 2 Classification books.

The ADS encourages local dahlia society memberships by offering a reduced membership rate to members of local dahlia societies.



**Spring PNDC meeting:**  
Saturday, March 23, 2019

Portland Location and Time  
to be announced

## 2019 DVD of New ADS Introductions

Thanks to Claudia Biggs, the 2019 DVD of the New ADS Introductions is finished and now for sale. It is on sale at the ADS website or can be purchased from Claudia. There are 2 versions: The automated program on one disc costs \$13. The automated program with a second disc of low resolution photos is available for \$20.

To order these on line from ADS, just look for the 'store' and you can purchase them using PayPal. Or you can contact Claudia who will send the program to you. Please give her a few days notice to send them. Her mailing address is 3332 Elmhurst Ave, Spokane, WA 99208 She can be reached at: 509-326-1953 or 509-979-3228



## Lane County Dahlia Society

Our "Bounty of Blooms Show " this year was an amazing display of dahlias and was a resounding success as a result of Show Chair Cheryl Hawkins and Judging Chair Lexa Cookson, and all of our members who entered their lovely blooms and volunteered their time to set up, tear down, and everything in between. There were many exhibitors entering our show that drove from Portland, Roseburg, Azalea, Gold Beach, Coos Bay and other far away places in Oregon and Washington. Lexa Cookson reported that we now have over 100 Facebook followers and that 1200+ people had viewed the site online! Our 2019 show, Sept. 14th & 15th, we will host the PNDC show and are look forward to putting on a fun show. A big thanks is due Phyllis Shafer, our Treasurer and Show Accountant for her hard work. The Quilt created and donated by LCDS member Carol Pud'homme, was raffled at the end of the show and won by member Sandi Howard, of Glide, OR.

by Deb Gilmer

Fall programs for LCDS focused on how to stage dahlias for a show, how to float a dahlia bloom, how to interpret the show book and making different types of arrangements. An October "Garden Hop" to the gardens of: 1) Deb Gilmer and Suz Copenhafer 2) Cheryl Hawkins and 3) Lazy Day Dahlias with Tina Davidson was a great finish to another great year of blooms. Our November meeting featured ways of digging, cleaning, cutting/dividing, and storing our tubers for the winter. On December 7<sup>th</sup> the LCDS Executive Board and interested others met at the home of Eleanor and Wayne Schantz to discuss new meeting programs and presentations for 2019, and to plan for our 2019 dahlia show. We agreed to hold another meeting in January in order to explore ideas and finalize details. We wish you and yours a peaceful holiday season and all the best for 2019.

## Portland Dahlia Society

We have had our elections and are pleased to announce that we have switched to shared presidential duties. Laura Oldenkamp and Nan Hage are taking the job of president and sharing the duties. They worked together the last couple of years as our valued vice presidents. Actually, in our club the vice presidents may do more work as they are in charge of the club's presentations at the meetings. This takes lots of planning as our club is 80% presentations and 20% other. They did an excellent job of dahlia promotion and education for the last couple of years.

By the way, our club is very shrewd about fund raising and we sell donated dahlia tubers and clumps

by Ted Kennedy

and cuttings at 7 of our 11 meetings each year. Our biggest sale date is the April meeting when we have many tables of donated tubers, most with pictures, for sale for set prices. And at that meeting we hold our traditional tuber and plant auction which features two auctioneers, a computer projection screen to show pictures of the dahlias, and a white board to list the name of the variety. Our auction is run very efficiently and we have bidder's numbers with bidder's paddles assigned and we keep track of what each bidder bought and the price. At many of the meetings we use silent auctions as they allow us to conduct presentations without interruption. Lastly, our 2019 Show Flower will be Jitterbug.

## Wild Rivers Dahlia Society

Picking the best time and day for our meetings. 5:30pm seemed to be the best time. It gives us time to get there after work and get our stuff ready. Three times I have sent out choices over the years. First we were on Tuesdays, then we shifted to Saturdays as voted on by members. Well that did not work, especially when the sun came out. Fridays were the last choice and worked with room availability. I have a number of guest speakers lined up, however, I would like to see more attendance to make it worth their time. They are willing to come and share their knowledge of what it takes to grow quality blooms. As with your garden, the time you invest into the society helps us stay healthy. Last year's show was a challenge to put on due to the changes needed but, was worth the effort. We received many

by Bob Chibante

compliments from visiting societies members and the public about the show. Big thanks to Carol for getting us setup with the school.

Being a small club makes it a challenge to get help. Whether you can help for the whole show or only part of it anything is appreciated. Next month I will be posting a list of what is needed to put on a show. The added stress of being moved at the last minute again threw me off. (see behind the scenes). We are still young and one of the newest societies in the country. Here is to making next year a success. I look forward to investing my time in helping you with any questions or suggestions you may have. We will be sending out a list of our sponsors next month, including dahlia suppliers.



## 2018 Nanaimo Greetings

by Judy Stephens

The Spring was a cool one and we didn't know when we would get our tubers in the ground and then the warmth came and pretty much stayed right into October. Planting of approximately 600 tubers was completed and who knows how many thousands of corms of gladioli. Vern planted several seedlings of dahlias and gladioli this year, with some showing good promise.

We had a very successful tuber sale at the end of April and Vern went to the Victoria tuber sale as well since we had so many tubers for sale. Vern stores the dahlia tubers in a raised flower bed of landscape ties, with the soil removed and shavings to replace the soil. The tubers are layered so they don't touch with a layer of shavings then tubers again. This is repeated with a thick 8 inch layer of shavings to top everything off then 2 layers of heavy poly and a tarp anchored down to keep snow and moisture out. A bed of approximately 30ft by 5ft holds all of the split tubers. This has been our method of storing for the past several years and works well. In the spring when the warmth starts, the tubers naturally sprout some growth to give the tubers somewhat of a head start.

Vern and Al Boquist were instrumental in putting our display garden at Vancouver Island University again this year. They placed clear plastic containers with the bottoms cut out around each dahlia plant to

keep the pests away. The end results were great plants and lots of blooms.

Our show was smaller in entries but we still managed to have a beautiful display of DAHLIAS and GLADIOLI for the public to enjoy. Several members of the Victoria club entered our show and were some of the major winners of our sections.

Our banquet dinner was at the ABC Restaurant in North Nanaimo with a wonderful turn out of members and guests. Again our members did not disappoint with donations of door prizes so everyone again received one.

Our membership has increased with new younger members joining and very keen to grow dahlias and gladioli. Our candidate judges have made the promise to write the accredited judges test over the winter, so here's hoping nothing gets in their way. We really need the judges! Our senior judges are short in supply and if Victoria didn't come to our show, we would have to make alternate plans.

Our president Anne Kenny will be leaving us in the spring so we will have elections at the first meeting of the new year. Our treasurers also are looking for someone they can shadow for this next year when that person takes on the roll of finances.

Digging, splitting and storing is almost done for this season. Looking forward to a quiet winter and wishing everyone a safe and healthy winter!

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## Victoria Greetings!

from Phil Newton and Teresa Thom

Wow - didn't we have a great show this year! This is our third year in the Prospect Lake Community Hall. The size of the hall has proven to be perfect and the people (committee) running the hall has been wonderful to work alongside. We haven't gotten the process perfect yet but boy are we close. We had very few "hiccups" this year and have made notes to make next year's even better. We had good representations from our sister club Nanaimo and a few (but greatly appreciated) from Vancouver on the mainland.

Many thanks to Cathy Featherby, our President, for great leadership and hard work to make the show the success it was. She put in countless hours and kept all organised. Cathy did a wonderful job "herding cats" this year.

Barry and Mary Willoughby handled the show chair position perfectly showing their combined 60 years plus of experience. We had an overwhelming amount of support from our members, many thanks especially to Darlene, Teresa, and Marcia. Another big thanks to all the new novice show people. This was the biggest new group in years. Congrats to

John Wrinch moving up to amateur and placing three on the head table. We also picked up 12 plus new members.

But the biggest accolade has to go to Paul McKittrick for his best in single flower in show with his new introduction of a Red Pom Pom Chi nese Red. Paul said this was his first Best overall flower in a show and we all know how hard he works at his beloved Dahlias.

Our club is growing and in our new meeting location we are going strong. We are always looking for help at show time and invite anyone to come over to our island in Pacific and enjoy our Victoria hospitality.

### Have you renewed your membership?

To be listed in the 2019 roster, you must renew your PNDC membership. Contact the secretary or treasurer of your dahlia society and include your current mailing address, phone number, e-mail, and how you want the newsletter delivered to you: by e-mail or postal service. PNDC dues are \$10 per person or \$15 per family. It is important to do this soon!

## An Enjoyable Trip to the ADS National Show by Elva Sellens

Unfortunately, I was not present at our Douglas County DS and PNDC show as I was attending the ADS National Show at the Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square outside of Philadelphia PA. As a new ADS Membership Chair, I was obligated in attending the National Show. Longwood gardens - What a beautiful setting for a dahlia show which was located in their huge conservatory. There were over 4,000 people that came to the garden Saturday and saw our dahlia show. We had a good representation from Oregon - Mark & Laura Oldenkamp, Gordon Jackman and myself. Three of us from the Northwest had blooms that went to the head table and one of Gordon's arrangements won. I won the best mignon single and pest peony in show. I carried a container of blooms on the plane with me and put it in the overhead compartment. Gordon Jackman told me how to take my blooms on the plane and gave me some orchid tubes that hold water to put on the stems. Traveling on a plane, you mainly take smaller flowers but I did manage to take a ball dahlia, waterlily, stellar, cactus, collarettes, peonies, singles and mignon singles.

The luncheon at the garden was interesting. They had various wrap sandwiches. There was a chicken salad wrap that had a green wrap. Somehow, the green wrap did not look appealing to me so I tried their vegetarian wrap. I will never make a good vegetarian. It was like eating a salad in a tortilla shell. I don't think I will try that one in the future. I should have had the chicken salad wrap. The best item on the lunch menu was a brownie for desert. The Saturday night banquet was held at the conservatory at Longwood Gardens. Our food and food service at the Saturday banquet was outstanding - world class.

After our dinner, the Longwood staff put on a special half hour fountain and light show with music for us. They spent over \$20 million dollar renovating their fountain system. Some of the fountains shot water up to over 100 feet in the air. The smaller fountains had fire coming out of the top of the fountains with water cascading down below. I kept wondering how they kept the fire lit with all that water coming down under the fire.

Monday, we went on a bus tour to Chanticleer Gardens. They are normally closed on Mondays but opened the gardens for us to go through. I enjoyed the different colors and textures in the various garden settings. The garden was well worth going through.

Their benches to sit down were not ordinary benches but had different shapes and forms, such as a long leaf. Even their water fountain had a leaf shape built into the water basin. They had a snack for us during our garden tour where they had several platters of fancy finger sandwiches, a fruit platter and desert platter with petit fours, and some drinks. Wow! The Philadelphia Dahlia Society treated us grandly. Next on the tour was the Hagley Museum where DuPont Company was founded. Last on our tour was a tour of a mushroom farm. Pennsylvania is a mushroom capital in the U.S. where they provide 62% of the mushrooms sold in the U.S. They grew several different types of mushrooms. The white button mushrooms grow double its size in a day. It was a long day for a tour but well worth going on it. If you have a chance to go to a National Show go on their tours. It is an interesting way to see a different part of the country. I really enjoyed myself.



Gordon Jackman relaxing on a Rock Chair



Dahlia displays in Conservatory at Longwood Gardens.



## 2018 PNDC Conference Meeting Report

by Larry Smith

The PNDC Conference Show, hosted by The Douglas County Dahlia Society, was held at The Douglas County Fairgrounds, September 22 and 23 in Roseburg. Kudos to DCDS for putting on an excellent show and arranging for the conference banquet, held at Casey's Restaurant.

The PNDC Gold Medal for Lifetime Achievement in promoting dahlias was awarded to the following: Cheryle Hawkins and Michael Canning, Ray and Kim Sturman, and Larry Smith. Each was presented with a beautiful plaque to commemorate their selection. Cheryle said she wished Michael could have been there to receive this honor. Ray announced that he is retiring from showing dahlias. Larry asked if this means he could now relax and rest on his laurels (answer: not quite). The election of PNDC officers for the next two years was held. Larry Smith

(Portland DS) was elected President, Bob Chibante (Wild Rivers DS) as Vice President, Phil Newton/Teresa Thom (Victoria DS) as Secretary, Elva Sellens (Douglas Co. DS) as Treasurer. Mark Oldenkamp will remain our Representative to ADS. Cheryle Hawkins (Lane Co. DS) will continue to serve as Newsletter Editor and while this is currently a non-voting position, we will surely seek her input.

Larry announced that the new Leadership team, which includes representation from most PNDC Societies, will begin an extensive review of all of our current activities and practices in undergoing a process review effort. If anyone has some good ideas that might be considered to make PNDC a better organization, give them to Larry at or any member of the team.

## DOUGLAS COUNTY DAHLIA SOCIETY

by Elva Sellens

Douglas County Dahlia Society hosted the PNDC show in Roseburg OR on September 22-23, 2018.

The major awards given were:

- Best 1 bloom in show: Chimacum Troy, won by Les Connell
- Best 3 blooms in show: River's Purple Pinwheel, won by Christy Parks
- Best 1 disc bloom in show: Inflammation, won by Larry Smith
- Best 3 disc blooms in show: Inflammation, won by Larry Smith
- Best Basket in show: Hollyhill Speckles, won by Christy Parks
- Best Arrangement in show: Theme "Out of the Box", won by Camille Noel.

Everyone enjoyed our luncheon that we put on for judges and clerks. Thank you to Richard Parks for organizing this great picnic. Saturday night, we held the PNDC banquet where the gold medal awards and the show awards were presented.

This year there were two PNDC Gold Medal Awards presented: Ray Sturman from Powers, Oregon of the Douglas Dahlia Society, and Cheryle Hawkins and her husband, the late Michael Canning of the Lane County Dahlia Society. On Sunday, we held two garden tours at Parks Dahlias and Clacks Dahlia Patch.

## PACIFIC NORTHWEST DAHLIA CONFERENCE TREASURER REPORT

submitted by Elva Sellens,

9/22/18		Expenses:	
Beginning balance as of 4/14/18	\$14,108.64	1319 4/14 Douglas Co:Show expense	\$250.00
Income:		1321 4/18 Gr. Philadelphia DS:Nat Show	\$100.00
Tuber Auction	\$656.00	1312 4/18 USPS: PNDC Rosters mailed	\$ 8.02
Dues	\$ 20.00	1313 5/02 Teresa Thoma: Ferry subsidy	\$ 150.00
Interest 5/2017-8/2017	\$ .59	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$833.12</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>+ 656.59</b>	<b>Ending balance as of 9/22/18</b>	<b>\$13,588.27</b>

# A Visit to Victoria

by Larry Smith

In early October, I was fortunate to be invited by the Victoria Dahlia Society to come for a visit and speak at their monthly meeting. Graciously hosted by Phil Newton and Teresa Thom, this gave me the chance to visit the area, meet some of the Canadian judges I have worked with in my position as PNDC Accreditation Chair, and to strategize how the PNDC may support our northernmost sister clubs. It was my first trip to Victoria, a very clean and beautiful city, population 85,000, nestled next to the Strait of Juan de Fuca in southern British Columbia.

Airline travel made this a convenient jaunt...takeoff to landing is only 30 minutes from Portland to Seattle.

The Seattle to Victoria trip is 20 minutes. I arrived on a radiantly sunny Thursday morning, greeted by Phil, and was carried away to dahlia heaven. A brief tour of the town of Sidney was followed by a visit to Barry and Mary Willoughby's half acre. Mary had prepared a delicious lunch of homemade soup for us. After the meal we checked out the garden, including Barry's new seedlings.

During the afternoon we visited the VDS Display Garden, located just outside of their show venue.

Members meet there once a week to care for the garden and it shows. Mixed among the named varieties are seedlings originated by VDS members.

Just as we were leaving, several people were spotted gleefully twisting off blooms with their bare hands and making bouquets! Hey, are they supposed to do that? Looks like a "Please Do Not Pick The Dahlias" sign will be in order.

After a quick jaunt through Victoria, it was on to Phil and Teresa's to prepare for the VDS meeting. We hung out briefly in "Puerta Backyarda," Phil's man cave, and toured their garden as Teresa feverishly harvested mixed dahlia bouquets to sell at the local farm stand. Wow, their property is set up and well suited for hosting parties and events.

The VDS meeting, hosted in the community room of a senior living facility, was well attended with enthusiastic members. After a short business meeting, I was invited to speak on subjects such as the PNDC, the Canby Trial Garden, and dahlia culture. The main subject of the meeting was how to divide dahlia clumps. I was left with very positive vibes and a feeling that good things are happening within the Victoria Society.

Friday's forecast was for rain and Ma Nature followed through. Phil had planned to whisk me around the area for a garden tour, no way were raindrops going to stop us. Around the cape we went, arriving at Paul McKittrick's home on Cobble Hill. There to meet us was Vern Stephens from the Nanaimo club. Paul is working on a number of very nice seedlings, one of which won Best of Show at the VDS show this year and another, "Chi Nese Red" (MB Red) received one of the top scores in Canby Trial Garden. We simply have to get some of these new Canadian introductions growing in the states! After an impromptu meeting of us dahlia guys, we travelled to VDS President Cathy Featherby's country estate. The Featherbys cultivate a beautifully mixed

planting landscape and serve as host to llamas, antique automobiles, and an orphaned fawn. Her perfectly coiffed dahlia garden was holding up very nicely, even in the drippy weather.

Dinner that night was at a waterside restaurant with an amazing view. Phil, Teresa, and I were joined by Barry, Mary and Cathy. It was a wonderful time, the opportunity to visit informally with my Canadian dahlia pals.

The sun returned on Saturday, just in time for a morning visit to Connie Young-Davis's city garden.

Dahlias dominate her property and extend into the neighbor's yard as well. Connie prepared breakfast, quite a treat (she is an executive chef by day), and we ate overlooking her spectacular garden. Anyone who is paying attention knows that Connie leads all others in the PNDC in awards won every year and it is easy to see why. Even in early October, her blooms were Head Table quality, not a petal out of place. It is clear that her success is due not only to her innate talents, but a lot of hard work goes into that success. Rosettes and awards that Connie has won over the years are displayed in several areas of her home.

Last but not least, it was on to John Wrinch's Starling Lane Winery. A retired physician, he had just gotten back from his daily practice with his rowing team. John has a beautiful countryside property that plays host to weddings and other events. Dahlia plantings are scattered throughout the acreage, enhancing the landscape.

After dropping off a dozen of Teresa's bouquets at the farm stand, it was on to the airport and the end of my whirlwind tour of Victoria. I owe a big thanks to my generous and gracious hosts, Phil and Teresa, and to all of the VDS members whose hospitality made for a memorable visit. This won't be my last visit to British Columbia. As the incoming President of PNDC, it is my intention to find ways for our organization to do more to support our Canadian clubs, including the plan to provide a judges training there in 2020.



Connie Young-Davis and Larry Smith

# American Dahlia Society News

## Virus in Dahlias – Become Part of the Solution

*By the Dahlia Virus Team: Professor Hanu Pappu, Ron Miner and the Virus Team, Brad Freeman, Nick Weber, Jerry Moreno, and Linda Taylor.*

One of the opportunities that has evolved from the virus work at Washington State University is for you to become an important part of the solution to the problem of virus in our dahlia patches. There are two key items that need to become a part of your routine practice in your garden.

First is to watch for the appearance of virus on the leaves of your plants. Virus symptoms were illustrated in the brochure distributed in the June 2016 ADS Bulletin and those pictures can also be found on the ADS website: [dahlia.org](http://dahlia.org). If the foliage on your plants matches the appearance of the leaves in the brochure the plant should be removed from the garden and destroyed in an area away from the garden. Aggressive implementation of “remove and destroy” strategy on a dahlia garden has been shown to lead to a virtually virus-free garden! However you could also be removing some plants that don’t need to be removed.

An intermediate approach that has been available at the WSU Clean Dahlia Center is to test your dahlias for virus. That way you’ll know which of those suspicious-looking plants really has virus. In 2017 & 2018, testing was available at a subsidized rate of 30 samples for \$300. The rate was made possible by the cooperation of Professor Hanu Pappu and the financial support of the Sheetz-Chuey Foundation. We hope to be able to establish a similar arrangement for 2019.

It is virtually certain that your garden contains a mix of clean and virused dahlias. Some of the plants with virus could lack any evidence of virus

on the foliage. When you work in the garden, there is a very real risk that you can and will move virus from the virused plants over to the clean plants unless you disinfect your tools between each plant. A 10% bleach solution is the “gold standard” for disinfecting your tools but there are a couple more options listed in the table below.

The dishwashing detergent has the advantage of avoiding the damaging effect of the bleach on the metal in your tools. It is also readily available and inexpensive. The virkon S is an anti-viral product that is routinely used in veterinarian cleaning applications. It is readily available from internet suppliers. (My grandchildren tell me to “just Google it!”) Please be aware that anti-bacterial products like hand sanitizer can be completely ineffective in killing virus.

Disinfecting your tools is an essential part of dividing your clumps. There is no more aggressive attack on your plants than when you divide those clumps into tubers. Be sure to have one of the sterilization options sitting on your cutting bench to sterilize those cutting tools between each clump. I will have two or three cutters and both the bleach and soap solutions on my bench. The tools will be used in turn. Each will get a bleach dip and a soap rest while waiting for the next clump!

To become part of the solution of the dahlia virus problem; 1) remove obviously virused plants from your garden and 2) disinfect your tools between working on different plants.

## Looking Ahead to the Micro-Dahlia

By Mark Oldenkamp, ADS 2nd Vice President



At the annual meeting the ADS board approved a five year trial of incorporating a Micro dahlia for fully double and open center dahlia types. We already have this with Poms and Mignonette Singles.

When the December Classification book arrives we will see approx 7 new sections.

Micro Collarette, Micro Orchid, Micro Peony, Micro Waterlily, Micro Fully Double, Micro Anemone, Micro Stellar and maybe others. Technically, for classification, the size is 2” or less - just like the current definition for Poms and Mignons. I saw

something recently from the Federation of how they plan to incorporate Micros into their show schedules initially. I think they will add two sections only initially. The hope is that we will see many new micro cultivars during this 5-year Trial and, if true, it seems that Micro Dahlias will have found their place in ADS classification. Varieties that are Micro currently will presumably be given their new Micro class number in the upcoming 2019 CHD.

# How To Control a Perennial Problem in the Dahlia Garden

By Larry Smith

*In mid-October I visited two gardens of Portland friends, Linda Taylor and Larry Smith. I was very surprised to see that Larry's garden had no signs of Powdery Mildew! He agreed to write this article and divulge his secret weapon, as these photos illustrate. - Cheryle*

Powdery mildew. The scourge of every dahlia exhibitor and also for those who sell blooms to the public. It always seems to pop up just as the garden is coming into full glory and is very difficult to control. This year, I found considerable success in a roundabout way.

Two years ago, an infestation of spider mites appeared overnight and nearly put the kibosh on my show season. I sent an urgent email to Portland club members asking for suggestions on how to control the nasty little buggers. My friend Mike Riordan, offered a sample of something he had used, Stylet Oil. He was indeed my savior that year as this product got the mites under control and saved my show season.

After that season, I looked for Stylet on the internet and ended up ordering a 2.5 gallon supply. If I remember correctly, the cost was about \$40. The shipping costs proved to be steep, but I shopped around and found a deal for around \$15, putting the total cost at about \$55.

This year (2018), weather conditions in the Northwest were conducive to an early onset of powdery mildew. At all four shows I attended, exhibitors were complaining about the time it had taken them to clean it off the leaves of their entries. I noticed the first signs of mildew in my garden just before my first show in late August. I sent out an email to club members

and Mike responded that the Stylet oil was also useful for removing and controlling fungal plant disease. At that point, I sprayed the plants thoroughly with a tank sprayer. A few days later, I examined the plants and found notable improvement. Twice since then, I treated the plants.

Mission accomplished! As of this writing, on October 19, the leaves (see pictures) look healthy and show only a few very small traces of powdery mildew. The treatment also kept the spider mites at bay and knocked out a late influx of aphids.

Stylet is a horticultural oil that research has shown to be safe for use on ornamentals and edible crops and is not harmful to bees or beneficial insects.

It is recommended that application be done at a time when bees are not actively working. The recommended dosage is three tablespoons per gallon of water. At that rate, my 2.5 gallon order will last me for quiet a few years.

Yes, that's a lot of product, but when I talked about it during a presentation I gave at Victoria (B.C.) Dahlia Society's October meeting, some of the attendees came up with the idea of buying a supply and splitting it with several members. Many of them complained of annual onset of powdery mildew and were excited to learn of an environmentally friendly product that can control it.



*Note the strong color, the vigor of the leaves and the absence of powdery mildew*



## Thank you from the Editor

by Cheryle Hawkins

I would like to thank the members of PNDC and especially those who were at the Roseburg show, for their kind thoughts and words by awarding Michael and I the PNDC Gold Medal Award.

Michael would have really enjoyed receiving this award and I know how hard he applied himself as a dahlia-grower, a gardening mentor, the teacher of many things, acting as the role model and serving as the funny guy. He was looked up to by everyone he would meet in all the circles

he traveled.

Before he retired, as a music director and frequent radio host, he had a creative job and loved to mix music genres and come up with interesting music sets. The same applied with growing dahlias. He loved to mix it up when he planted, and studied many forms and grew the favorites of his friends. He loved to show them! I truly wish he could have been with me to receive this award. I know he would have been grinning!





# A Short History of the PNDC

Recollections by Tony DeRooy

## in September 1953...

At the completion of judging of the annual dahlia show of the Snohomish County Rose and Dahlia Society Show while enjoying a well prepared lunch with several judges from the Portland, Kitsap County and Washington State Dahlia Societies a suggestion was made by Tony DeRooy that an Association of Dahlia Societies in the Northwest should be started which would operate on a similar format to that of the Central States Dahlia Association which had been formed many years previously.

The primary purpose of the organization at that time was to promote the dahlia, and arrange an annual show sponsored each year by a member society. Several of the judges liked the idea and suggested that Peter Kershisnik from Portland and Tony DeRooy would set up some basic suggestions and bring this information to a meeting of delegates from each Society in early Spring.

Accordingly, we met at the Kershisnik home in November and with Madge Kershisnik taking notes we set down a number of suggestions to get the organization started. The name would be the Pacific Northwest Dahlia Conference. We would need a "Basic Show Schedule" in order that each hosting society would offer the same awards and exhibits in the same sections and classes. We would ask each participating society to secure some trophies for major show champions and suggested that the Labor Day weekend be reserved for our Big Annual Conference Show. With these suggestions in hand, we arranged for a meeting at the Charles Ayler residence in Tacoma on January 13, 1954. There were approximately fourteen delegates representing four Northwest Dahlia Societies. Portland, Snohomish County, Washington State (Tacoma) and Kitsap County. Elections were held:

President - Tony DeRooy of Snohomish County D.S.,  
Vice President - Peter Kershisnik of Portland D.S.,  
Secretary Treasurer - Mae Evans of Snohomish County D.S.

At this meeting a committee was appointed to write a constitution and by-laws for approval by the delegates at the Fall Show of the Snohomish County Rose and Dahlia Society in August of 1954. We made no effort to plan for a Conference Show that first year, but established a rotation system for annual shows. Snohomish County would be host for the first Conference Show on Labor Day 1955 and Portland, Washington State and Kitsap County would follow in succeeding years.

It was also established that following the Annual Show there would be a banquet and Conference Meeting with

business discussed, elections held and reports given by various committees.

The Seattle Dahlia Society was organized in October 1956 and Southern Oregon was also chartered the same year at Coos Bay. Through the efforts of John McEvoy, Daryl Crose, Emaline Cole and others, both of the new societies joined the PNDC making the Conference a strong organization. Other Societies were organized and also became part of the PNDC. In 1963 the PNDC consisted of Lane County D.S., Olympic D.S., Inland Empire D.S., Wenatchee Valley D.S., Grays Harbor D.S., Victoria Glad. & D.S. Spokane D.S. and Nanaimo Glad & D.S.

From the beginning, one of the primary objectives of the PNDC has been to publish a bulletin (The Pacific Dahlia) which would inform the members of Conference activities and provide cultural information. Tony DeRooy was named editor for the first year of publication. Later editors included Francis McDuffee, Peter Kershisnik, Phil Traff, Willis Collins and others.

The Conference also appointed a classification Committee and provided a classification listing of all varieties which grow in different form, size of color in the Pacific Northwest other than that listed in the American Dahlia Society Classification Book. (This with the blessing of the American Dahlia Society.)

The first PNDC show was presented at the Floral Hall, Forest Park, Everett Washington on September 3rd and 4th 1955. The show was hosted by the Snohomish County Rose and Dahlia Society in conjunction with its 46th annual show. Saturday evening a no host banquet was held in the ball room of the Monte Cristo Hotel with the annual conference meeting following. The Portland Dahlia Society was selected to host the 1956 Conference show. The Show was a great success with many entries in all categories.

### 2019 PNDC DAHLIA SHOW CALENDAR

**Victoria:** 8/17 - 8/18

**Portland:** 8/24 - 8/25

**Nanaimo:** 8/24 - 8/25

**Gold Beach:** 8/31 - 9/1

**Lane County:** 9/14 - 9/15

**Douglas County:** 9/21 - 9/22



## Mick Senior - A Legendary Hybridizer - by Ted Kennedy

As a dahlia breeder one quickly becomes aware that there are two ways you can develop a new dahlia variety. Yes, most new dahlias are grown from seeds. We all know that breeders control the pollination of dahlia flowers that in turn make seeds that are planted and when these plants bloom, good ones are selected and the tubers are harvested. The next year the plant is further evaluated and if it is really a good one, the stock is increased and more evaluation is done a third year. Flowers destined to be show flowers are then entered in trial gardens and/or are evaluated by judges at shows in the ADS Seedling competition. Flowers intended to be cut flowers or garden varieties can just be named and sold without any formal evaluation process.

But what is the second way that new dahlia varieties are created? The other way is the spontaneous genetic change in a dahlia plant that is called a "sport". The word in botany can refer to any part of plant changing genetically but in dahlias the entire plant can sport and that makes it easy to preserve the sported plant. When less than the entire plant sports, sometimes the sport can be preserved by taking cuttings of the sported section of the plant. Many times, a portion of the plant may sport and the sport continues into some of the tubers and in that case all of the tubers need to be planted to see if you have saved the sported variety.

What is a sport? Dahlias are octaploid meaning that they have 4 times the number of chromosomes as most organisms. Almost always, a sport is the loss of some of that genetic material and in that case the other genes for that trait take over. The most common sport in dahlias is a color sport, meaning that a flower has changed color or changed it's pattern of color. For example, a solid flower can sport to be a variegated flower. Or an orange flower, can sport and become a pink flower. There can be other types of sports too where the form of the dahlia sports to a different petal shape. For some reason these form sports are very rare. There is also a known sport where a large dahlia sported to be a giant dahlia (Rose Jupiter).

Spartacus is a large dark red informal decorative dahlia. It was hybridized by the late Mick Senior who I met shortly before he died. Spartacus won the Derrill W. Hart medal, Lynn B. Dudley medal and the Stanley Johnson medal. I was able to ask Mick Senior about the parents of Spartacus and he told me that the mother plant was Edna C. and the pollen parent was Zorro. The seed pod had but one seed.

Some dahlia varieties seem to have more color sports than others. It does make sense that flowers that have darker colors have more opportunities to sport to lighter colors. By the way, when a variegated flower sports to be a solid colored flower the increase in pigment can cause a slight but observable change in the shape of the flower petal as it makes it thicker.

Steve Meggos is a dahlias enthusiast and breeder who lives in the Chicago area. He specializes in giant dahlias and the sports of Spartacus. He says that he has 11 sports of Spartacus (actually some of these are sports of the sport). Early on when Mick Senior grew Spartacus, it sported to a red and white bicolor. It was

featured on the cover of the Dahlias of Today. The next year all of the flowers reverted to be solid colored. It seems that some sports are not stable, especially the bicolor sports.

In Steve Meggos' garden the first sport he observed was a lavender color that he named after a family member, Vassio. Vassio Meggos is my favorite sport of Spartacus as I like the color and for me it seemed to have better growth characteristics than the parent plant. By the way, Steve has been trying to use Spartacus as a seed parent too but it is a shy seed producer although some seedlings of it have been grown. Vassio Meggos is solid lavender and in Steve's garden a lavender plant sported to solid white. He named it Louis Meggos after another relative. Meanwhile at both Swan Island and in Steve's garden the original Spartacus sported to be a yellow and red variegated flower. The Swan Island sport was never introduced but the sport in Steve's garden was introduced and was named Harvey Koop (after the owner of the now defunct Hamilton Dahlia farm, at one time the largest in the USA).

Steve did not stop there. Spartacus also sported to a dark red flower with vertical stripes of orange pigment. He named this one John Meggos. Then Steve identified a bronze sport that he liked so well he named it after himself, Steve Meggos. Another flower sported to yellow and it was not healthy enough to be introduced. Meanwhile, over at Jerry Schonauer's JS Dahlias, he identified two more sports. One was the subdued variegated flower called JS Butterscotch and the other JS Jenny, a sport of Harvey Koop that is orange and very similar to the Steve Meggos flower. In Europe, another dahlia enthusiast has released a sport called Bohemian Spartacus that is variegated in a different pattern than Harvey Koop or John Meggos.

Are there other unreleased Spartacus sports? Steve Meggos says he has a bicolor version that does not grow very tall. He is increasing stock of a purple sport. The yellow sports are still being grown and may be healthy enough for release at some time. There are no known pink ones but I bet someone is working on it.



From top, L to R: Spartacus, Vassio Meggos, Harvey Koop, Steve Meggos, Bohemian Spartacus, Louie Meggos, JS Butterscotch, John Meggos, JS Jenny, Yellow - not released