

Brad Freeman explained the executive committee meets regularly between board meetings and making decisions on day-to-day things. We keep minutes and any decisions are approved by the board. All minutes for the board and executive committee are on the ADS website, members only section, under the ADS Board tab. The ADS organization chart can also be found in this area.

Brad discussed the process that we will use this morning and a little background. In 2005, Ron Miner, ADS president at the time, decided the board should get together in person. At that time, we developed a strategic plan for the ADS. We developed a vision statement and some goals. We went through the goals last time and edited them a bit. One of the things we are trying to do today is broaden our tent. We have a lot of members interested in the cut flower trade and interested in growing dahlias just for the enjoyment of growing them. We need to broaden our tent, we will be excluding a group of people who will keep our organization vibrant moving forward. In 2005, we went through brainstorming and developed several action items. We have accomplished the majority of them. These guided the ADS through a period of time. Since this was almost 20 years ago, it is felt that it is time to start thinking ahead about what the ADS will be for the next five to ten years. He would like to develop some action items of things we can focus on. We may need to think outside the box. Today we will be brainstorming to generate ideas without debating them.

We will break into small groups, each with a moderator and a scribe to write the ideas down. Each group will generate ideas on the same subject and then report out their brainstormed thoughts. Brad shared the goals that we went through last year. We have changed the focus of the ADS to be inclusive of all, not just the exhibitors and judges. We need to work toward making the ADS the premier dahlia organization for everything dahlia and we should continue to work on that as a goal. There was a question about why we need to redesign the logo as it does not translate well digitally. It isn't just the logo but also branding the ADS. The logo should represent the branding.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

First Breakout - Technology

We need to think about how technology will improve communication within the ADS. We also need to think about how we get our message out. The brainstorming from the three breakout sessions came up with the following items for Technology.

Group 1

- Technology for fundraising, electronic donation buttons, a dedicated fundraising position, fund raising tools
- Online secure membership tools, streamline membership
- Software for renewals – welcome notes
- Open meetings – Societies available through Zoom to share general rec to encourage societies to zoom availability for others outside their society
- Monthly newsletters, with question/answer section

- Physical tech needs – camera, projector, tripods, devices, etc. Recommend the needs and equipment so the societies will know what to purchase
- Outsource digital content creator or contractor or full-time employee
- Zoom mentorship/experts – new member chat group
- Mentors from societies group together to teach/train Zoom
- More training videos about anything – Zoom hybrid meetings, digging, planting, etc.
- Photo drop – not copyrighted, allow anyone to use
- More visuals online – attracts the eye and more see the information out there
- Identify the inefficient, not so professional processes to see how technology can help with that
- Improve email as a tool
- Better spam tools
- Easier access to board members
- What's the value to the members that we could increase through technology.
- The right job descriptions/areas of expertise
- 10 easy to do? Q.H.
- Website design help for local societies
- Get information about members' specialties and skill as a directory, non-dahlia related also
- Speaker's Bureau – pre-recorded for Zoom. Leverage Dahlia Talk, an open electronic meeting with question/answer platform.
- Expand Dahlia University – monetize through YouTube
- Top priorities #1 – All Zoom related, #2 – Membership tools for streamlining membership/directory, #3 – Fundraising technology

Group 2

- Use social media presence to attract younger members
- Videos, YouTube – Basic how-to's, alternative growing methods, container dahlia information
- Virtual meetings/hybrid meetings take extra work. Can attract members who can't attend regularly through hybrid meetings
- More virtual meetings result in less frequent in-person meetings
- ADS electronic asset sharing (judging, classification, images) Forum to sharing that information. How could that be more accessible to ADS members
 - Creative commons license
 - Excess tuber sales online/Shopify
 - Public photo teaser
 - Public vs member only access to photos.
 - Credit cards at ADS events
 - Membership online – ways to use technology for membership
- How did Calvin bring flowers today – alternative growing methods – share these ideas
- Engagement with cut flower industry.
- Add information to lists – is it good for cut flowers, exhibition, general garden.
- Recruitment virtually – how to recruit more members virtually

- Phone app to identify unknown dahlia – form, color, size – similar to bird identification app
- Online *Bulletin* live (active linked) format – able to click on ad, image to get additional information
- Merge what is popular with ADS and growing dahlias.
- Designate varieties as cut or exhibition or garden or ?
- Gather information from members about what attracted them to ADS or dahlias.

Group 3

- More direct email to all ADS members
- Highlight societies on website
- Need emails for all societies/members – some societies don't want to give emails
- Use of Google platform/workspace
- Use of text messages
- More social media – Facebook, TikTok, Instagram
- Catalog for the Image Library
- Use of holograms, QR codes in *Bulletin*, AI
- Online training on the use of the CHD
- YouTube videos
- Digital welcome to the ADS
- iPhone/android resources – use of online classification guide (tuber sales, plant sales)
- Expand/improve how we use list
- Cross reference to a worldwide dahlia list even if it is just a link
- Digital list of Cream of the Crop – for various types of flowers (cut, container, etc.)

Second Breakout – Research & Education

This should be other things we should be researching and other educational opportunities

Online Group

- Try to harness the “citizen” scientist for the various dahlia research avenues.
- Sponsor a science fair type of event for junior members.
- Creating a help tree for either identifying a problem with a dahlia or to identify the variety, perhaps using a dichotomous key (a tree with a yes/no flow chart to determine an answer) This would allow us to give people a way to get some answers on their own.

Group 1

- Practical applications, easy & affordable, for virus research
- At home virus test – easy & affordable
- Provide information about genome project
 - History
 - Formal agreement
 - Made public
 - Has genome project been peer reviewed?

- Citizen science – grant money, apply to National Science Foundation
 - Research soil content, fertilizer, extending vase life, watering
 - Dahlia specific
- Coordinated and make accessible – one person to collect and find research report and link to members and publicize
- Conduct our own ADS mini research experiments around the U.S. in club display and trial gardens.
- Use a dichotomous key (answer questions to lead to the correct identification)
- Virtual husbandry/culture workshops – non-member pricing (*be aware of legal ramification of charging money)
 - Topping
 - Planting
 - Harvesting
 - Disbudding
 - Showing
 - Judging clinics
 - Staging
 - Arranging
 - Tech use workshops/training
 - Potting
- Educate clubs on tech use/Zoom
- Videos of actual judging of flowers at shows and publicize
- Ad Hoc committee for education to gather/coordinate all information on dahlia culture from past *Bulletins*.

Group 2

- Preservation of varieties – also identify varieties at risk of loss
- Network with UK/worldwide to help preserve some varieties
 - Methods to preserve – UK, David Brown; New Zealand, Walter Jack – leaf cuttings
 - Meristem tip – WSU
- Create a charitable foundation to help preserve varieties – will take tubers and money
- Soil research
- Regional grow guides – *Dahlias: A Monthly Guide* isn't always useful to regions outside the northwest
- How to mitigate local conditions
- Practical applications from virus research and genome project – What will we learn that we can apply to what we are doing
- How does virus affect viability and impact appearance
- Growing in inhospitable environments – what can we learn from areas where they grow in inhospitable environments
- Potted/container dahlias – above or below ground – what about hydroponics in dahlias
- Classification code for cut/garden/exhibition

Group 3

- More videos on all things growing dahlias
- Research on fertilizer including micronutrients
- Soil research

- Tuber size research – small tubers vs large tubers – is there a connection between tuber size and plant production
- Watering styles/climates – what works in different areas
- Growing modules similar to judging modules
- Hands on training via Zoom or other online process
- Interpreting test results
- Mycorrhizae research – is it beneficial or not
- Tuber processing/storage – humidity, heat, air flow – how does that affect tubers
- Identify some best practices – can the ADS come up with some overreaching best practices
- Identify eyes/viability/eye research - blind eyes – can you get blind eyes to grow
- Research timing on cutting/digging/dividing – what is the best practice on when to cut, dig, divide
- Research lasers for cutting/dividing – use of a tiny light saber?
- How to get a blue gene into dahlias
- Research existing digital resources
- Research best practices for growing in containers – more persons looking for this information

Third Breakout – Branding/Logo

The thought is that there has been some discussion about the need for a new logo. We will likely put together an ad hoc committee to look at how we will accomplish this. When it was done in 2008, there was a contest, and it was not a simple process. This time we hope to rely on experts in marketing and digital technology. Branding is how you present yourself to the world. What is ADS representing to the world and how will we present it? Once we decide on that, we can tie that together with the logo. Marketing is how we connect with the bigger gardening world; we should be the expert about dahlias in the gardening world.

Group 1

- Keep image – keep some wording to explain who we are, Dahlias!
- Moderate agreement for changing the logo – see the need because of professional opinions – not easy to apply to electronic media
- Logo should be uniform, consistent –can be used on letterhead, emails
- Modify existing logo – cheaper and retains some historical value
- Look for graphic designer within membership to design pro bono or for a small fee, consult
- NO contests
- Limited feedback from overall membership
- Compliance among board members upon decision
- Small group task force project – limit number of people
- Logo needs to be transferrable to swag – fabric, glass, paper
- Branding should be uniform within the ADS
 - Signature line in emails
 - Letterhead
 - Website documents

- Acknowledgements
- Constant contacts

Group 2

- North American group that grows and shows dahlias – who we are
- “The dahlia experts”
- Are we a social organization – is that primary “We come for the dahlias and stay because of the people”
- Garden enthusiasts – yes, we are; many grow other things as well
- “Dahlia gardening is therapy”
- Perception that we are a bunch of retired folks – that’s not the whole picture
- Use photos with youth/all ages to popularize the youth aspect
- All ages appreciate the beauty of the dahlias
- No free clip art used in branding/logo/descriptions of ADS
- “Dahlias connect people” – tag line - Dahlias connect you with your community – people stop and want to talk to you about our dahlias
- Panel “comic” to show how easy it is to grow dahlias (steps to growing a dahlia – buy a tuber, dig a hole, plant the tuber, water, maybe fertilize it and you get a flower) – people are always asking about how hard it is to grow dahlias. Convey to the general public that dahlias are easy to grow

Group 3

- Experts on dahlias – own it!
- Swag items for the online store – hats, mugs, pins, shirts, knee pads, knee mats, good gloves, different styles of cutters, aprons
- Branding rememberable
- Search engine optimization – if someone googles something about dahlias, make sure ADS is somewhere near the top
- “Natural beauty” – tag line
- Over 100 years of experience – tag line
- All inclusive of all types of dahlias
- Long blooming
- Everyday use items in the store -
- Supporting gardeners for over a century – bumper stickers
- Beginner’s kit in ADS store (3 cornel tubers, hat shoes)
- Does logo need to be redone (the actual image)
- Use bicolor or blend dahlia
- Integrated with logo that we were established in 1915
- Change dahlia form
- Does it need to be circular
- I brake for dahlias – bumper sticker
- I dig dahlias- bumper sticker
- Hawaiian shirt with dahlias
- Work in my garden and hang out with my dahlias
- Different orientation of logo

The process will be to put these ideas into action items. Some will not be immediate. The board should decide on some priorities and determine what is the most important. A lot of what we talked about is long-term projects. We will likely want other volunteers to assist with these tasks. It may be easier to focus on some of the things that were common within the groups.

Some of the common ideas, things that we can work on were:

- ◆ Improve our membership tools – difficult to access the members only section – allow them to have their own username and password
- ◆ Virtual meetings – Zoom improvements
- ◆ Growing modules, similar to judging modules – get rid of the perception that dahlias are hard to grow
- ◆ Dahlia Research Center – need to put all the ADS information in one location
- ◆ Way to continue and get the container dahlia re-energized as there are many people who have limited space for growing dahlias/plants
- ◆ For membership - to join the ADS, a certain amount comes out each month instead of a one-time fee. Perhaps use this could be done as a donation
- ◆ Patron and benefactor membership
- ◆ Helping those who struggle with technology – Zoom tutorial
- ◆ Recruiting more active volunteers, especially those who are at the point of retirement
- ◆ Brad sent out a letter to all members regarding four open board positions and received some responses. The only one that is difficult to fill is the National Show Chair. We need to find talent within the ADS to help with some of these tasks.
- ◆ National Show – question re: do we want to continue our national shows past 2025;overwhelming yes. The difficulty lies in finding a society or conference that is willing to do it. It is a huge challenge; we don't have anyone for 2026. Important to go out and recruit societies, providing information and answering questions about what is involved in hosting a national show. We really need a National Show Chair.
- ◆ Encourage local societies to update bylaws, check what the local/state regulations are. They vary from state to state so the ADS is not able to assist.

The next session will be an introduction to Google workspace. We have a lot of important databases of information that are in external locations. If there is a catastrophic event, we are not going to be able to readily access it. Google workspace gives us the ability to start putting that information backed up to the cloud. Once we start using this platform, we can use it to communicate better between the board and the committees. Between google and Microsoft, it appears that google is the better option.

Jessica explained that Google drive is hooked up to various options – documents, sheets, slides.

Terry Schroeder

ADS General Secretary