

**American Dahlia Society
Minutes – Board Meeting
March 10, 2024**

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 pm PDT by President Brad Freeman.

Present

Board members present were Brad Freeman, Mark Oldenkamp, Ken Jensen, Terry Schroeder, Charles Miehm, Harry Risetto, Jerry Landerholm, Ron Miner, John Morton, Alli Richards, Dan Baulig, Karen Sanchez, Jess Becker, Linda DeRooy Holmes-Cook, Alan Fisher, Heather Ramsey, Mel Epstein, Bob Schroeder, Elva Sellens, Sarina Lagor, Debbie Pavich, Larry Smith, Roger Walker, Anna Kandra, Sharon Swaney, and guests, Misty, Florez, Carol Palmer, Laura Fisher.

Remembrances

Brad asked for a moment of remembrance for ADS members who have passed or are seriously ill. Brad stated Ken Walton, a member of the Washington State Dahlia Society and other societies within the Federation, who recently passed away. He is remembered for his enthusiasm, his smile, work in the trial garden and tireless worker behind Marilyn. This will be a huge loss in the Pacific Northwest. The National Capital Dahlia Society lost Bob Edwards in December. He was an active member of the NCDS and he will be missed by the National Capital and all who knew him. Brad asked that we have a moment of silence for those two as well as all the dahlia greats that have passed and any that are having difficulties now.

Minutes

Minutes from the November 12, 2023, meeting were sent to board members. **Bob Schroeder moved, and Harry Risetto seconded to approve as written. The motion carried.**

Executive Committee

The executive committee met on February 4 and February 18. Those minutes were sent to board members. **Mel Epstein moved and Heather Ramsay seconded to approve the actions of the executive committee meetings of February 4 and February 18, 2024. The motion passed.**

OFFICERS REPORTS

President

The executive committee met on February 4th and again on February 18th this year. The most significant action taken by the executive committee was the approval to purchase the group liability insurance policy offered by the Philadelphia Insurance Company and approval of a revised fee structure for the local dahlia societies who participate in the insurance program. The secretary emails copies of the minutes of the executive committee meetings to all Board members and they are available on the ADS website.

During the board meeting on June 9-11, 2023 action was taken regarding updating the policy regarding use of the ADS logo. This action stems from inquiries of people wanting to use the ADS logo on their personal social media pages. Attached is a draft of a proposed updated logo use policy which is based on a policy drafted around 2010. This has been circulated to a group of Board members for their review. I would like the board to consider adopting the updated logo policy.

Some people may rely on a simple screen grab to add the ADS logo to their print or digital media. However, the ADS has in its possession files containing the logo in various formats along with specification sheets with color and font information. Attached is a document containing the logo specifications. It still needs to be determined if the ADS wants or needs to provide access to those files and specification sheets. I would like Jess, Anna, Sharon, and Linda to make a recommendation to the board regarding access to the logo files.

The national show committee has been rejuvenated under the leadership of Bob. One of the obstacles that local dahlia societies face when they are contemplating hosting a National Dahlia Show is the financial burden. A certain amount of "seed money" is needed for deposits on facilities, buses, etc. I am proposing that the ADS create a dedicated fund for national dahlia shows and solicit donations from local dahlia societies and/or individuals. The initial goal would be to raise \$100,000 in this fund. For future fundraising the ADS could consider selling merchandise, such as shirts, aprons, hats, etc. with an ADS/dahlia logo to be determined. The proposal for the national show endowment fund is attached and I would like the board to consider adopting the proposal. If adopted, the fundraising would begin this spring.

The ad-hoc committee considering changes to the extended membership and/or membership year will be meeting soon. The goal is to have a recommendation to the board by the June Meeting.

Treasurer

Charles Miehme reported he sent out the treasurer's report as of February 28. We are already running a surplus for the year and memberships are still coming in, especially on PayPal. The CHD has been paid and by changing the size was so it could be shrink wrapped instead of having to manually put it in an envelope, which saved a lot of money. Last year we had a nice surplus, recouping the loss from the previous year, due to two large one-time expenditures. We are in good financial shape. **Alan Fisher moved, and Alli Richards seconded to approve the treasurer's report subject to review. The motion passed.**

Balance Sheet – February 29, 2024

Unrestricted Funds	
Ameriprise Investment Account	\$ 4,671.16
Vanguard Investment Account	\$ 53,597.56
Wells Fargo Bank - checking - operating	\$ 59,981.09
Total Unrestricted Funds	\$ 118,249.81

Restricted Funds

Ameriprise Investment Account - Boeke Bequest	\$ 38,105.57
Wells Fargo Bank - checking account - Virus Fund	\$ 9,343.84
Wells Fargo Bank - checking account - 2025 National Show	\$ 25.00
Wells Fargo Bank – checking account – Tony Evangelista Memorial Fund	\$ 3,375.00
Wells Fargo Bank – checking account – Memorial Fund	\$ 400.00
Wells Fargo Bank - savings account - Genome Project	\$ 99,708.21
Total Restricted Funds	\$ 150,957.62

Total ADS Funds \$ 269,207.43

First Vice President

Mark Oldenkamp reports another year starts with some exciting opportunities ahead. Future new leaders within the growing membership of the ADS are needed and it is hoped we get a good response from the talent and interests survey that is being deployed by President Brad. In the short-term, finding someone for the bulletin editor position is the most significant of the volunteer jobs in the ADS leadership team.

We need to continue our migration to Google Workspace. A few of the board members have not yet activated the Google email address designated for the board position you have. We are starting to use Google drive to hold some of the reports and work documents for the various committees. I expect we need some additional training and help which Jess Becker, our technology chair, is happy to accommodate. One of the most important goals near term is to establish procedures that will secure our membership information in a secure Google drive. The executive committee supports this need as a high priority.

2023 was a particularly good year financially. The transition to the new publication schedule and the new membership year was both positive and challenging. Going forward things should be smoother as we get used to the new annual pattern of activities. Thanks to Mel Epstein for the excellent work on the insurance program.

Thanks to the Minnesota Society for hosting the next planning meeting in early June. One of the top items for this meeting is to agree on the top goals/actions items for the future of ADS in the form of an updated five-year plan. All organizations need to seek and commit to changes that will keep themselves relevant and sustainable.

The work of the national show committee appears to be yielding some future national show hosting interest, which is positive.

Time to wake up our tubers for cuttings, to get the next crop of new varieties into our trial gardens and to prepare for planting. I am looking forward to the 2024 National Show in Wenatchee and with hopes for many new dahlias enthusiasts to join the regular attendees as we celebrate the “diversity” of Dahlias.

Third Vice President

Ken Jensen reports he is looking forward to another growing season. Thank you, Mel for making insurance available to Canadian societies. Alberta has already purchased their private coverage. Our trial garden in 2025 will have a new home at Olds College, an Agricultural College. Also, the Alberta Society has decided to sponsor a Canadian introduction with \$100.00 US for every national show until further notice. The funds will be submitted with our membership dues by the membership chair.

REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

North Atlantic Conference

Robert Fackovec reports the North Atlantic Conference societies and members are looking forward to that early spring that was promised us by the Punxsutawney Phil. We have been busy over the winter putting together our societies' show dates and information. This information is available on the ADS website.

We have been discussing a possible replacement for the floral foam used in displaying blooms and have some promise with a new product from Phoom Labs. It is environmentally friendly and is derived from corn. The conference societies are gearing up for their respective tubers sales and we are hoping they all do well with this important fundraiser.

I am inviting all the ADS society members and growers to send entries to our Eastern Trial Garden. You will not be disappointed with the care they will receive. Our climate and growing conditions are similar to the west coast gardens.

Thanks to all the North Atlantic Conference societies and best of luck for the start of a great 2024 dahlia season in the northeast.

Pacific Northwest Conference

Mark Oldenkamp reports PNDC leaders planned and hosted an amazing retreat in early February which was attended by about 35 members. It was a jam-packed session which included a brief annual meeting and some excellent programs. Lunch was provided by the conference as well as dinner for those that were staying over until Sunday. We encouraged our judges to take advantage of the judging modules available online. There was a great hands-on presentation about how to create a basket and a PowerPoint on how to judge a basket. Making and judging baskets is an area where many judges lack experience and confidence. We had a lot of FUN, with raffle prize drawings throughout the day! Thanks to many very generous donors we were able to share tubers, pot roots, wine and lots of other gardening related items while making a few dollars to help cover the cost of the gathering.

The new Owl cameras made for a much-improved experience for our Zoom participants. As we learn how to use this technology it can only get better. Plans have already begun for a repeat retreat opportunity next February. While weather can be unpredictable this time of the year it generally is a better time with less pressure for seedlings, cutting and planting prep that gear up as spring approaches.

Judges training dates were confirmed for 2024 which includes a training session on August 3rd hosted by River's Dahlias in Veneta, OR. There will be some dahlias

blooming then and the options for training will be plentiful. By holding this in the southern part of our region, we hope to get some new judges to attend and start learning. The online judging modules are another excellent tool, but more learning can happen when sharing and mentoring with experienced judges occurs. A trial garden judging day in Canby will be held the weekend of August 24-25, more details to come.

Tuber sales are up next so societies will be collecting tuber donations and preparing for some fundraising.

There is enthusiasm building for the National show in Wenatchee where it sounds like many are planning to attend..

Pacific Southwest Conference

John Morton reports all is well in California. We have water. After several years of drought, the last two years have been ones that have filled our lakes.

We would like to applaud Kristine Albrecht and her KA's Khaleesi for receiving the Stanley Johnson Medal for most higher awards in 2023.

Our 73rd Pacific Southwest Dahlia Conference was held February 24th. By the numbers in attendance, about 90, we can say that our societies are growing and dahlia fever abounds. Since the Covid years, the societies have continued using Zoom in their monthly meetings and this has allowed those that might not join a society because of distance to be involved. Dr. Virginia Walbot of Stanford University, spoke on Dahlia Genetics. She is interested in the color of blooms. Susanne Bontempo from Plant Harmony spoke on water, mildew, and fungus. Abby Southard, one of our outstanding juniors spoke on her garden and her website. A panel of dahlia growers that grow in community gardens spoke on their gardens and how we can gain new members from those that visit these gardens.

One of the most interesting talks was given on how to buy dahlias in this age of dahlia enthusiasm. Many of our members are complaining that they try to buy from the vendors on the internet but when they try to buy the vendor is sold out. I know this is a good sign for the growth of dahlias in the world but frustrating for those looking for new or special dahlias.

Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers

Alli Richards reports the Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers is anxiously awaiting the 2024 American Dahlia Society National Show, September 5-9 in Wenatchee, WA. We are in the home stretch and currently meeting at least monthly if not more. The registration will go live in April.

Our Dahlia Legacy Project is looking great. Please visit the new site at <https://www.legacy.nwdahlia.org/dahlia-legends/> You can tell how enthusiastic everyone is about capturing and sharing this information. It really shows how much community and willingness to share knowledge was and still is in our dahlia clubs.

Our member clubs are getting ready for their spring tuber sales followed by annual shows in the summer and fall.

Later this month we will have our spring workshop and Jack Crawford Memorial Auction. In June and July, we will have our summer workshop as well as our judging training. In August we will have our trial garden judging training.

We are all looking forward to seeing old friends and making new ones this summer in Wenatchee!

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ADS Store

Dan Baulig reports the large Print CHD has arrived, but he is still waiting for CHD's to arrive. Store sales have been slow but are picking up. On January 24th USPS raised the price of postage which affected media mail. The price of most of the books in the store had to be raised. The CHD postage rate increased 21¢ per book and the Composite postage rate increased 95¢ per book. The CHD postage outside the US increased \$1.25 per book and the Composite increased \$1.60 per book.

Since January, the store has shipped 52 books. Last year, in the same period, the store shipped 200 books.

Classification

Karen Sanchez reports the classification committee suffered some member losses last year. All vacated positions have been filled with new senior judges. The full roster is listed in the 2024 CHD.

As most have heard, there was a snafu with the CHD. There was a bad sort that she pulled; she is working on getting the information corrected. The back half of the book, where information about number of blues and higher awards is only about 70% correct. It primarily affects blooms that were shown in the eastern region. There are a few flowers that got included that shouldn't have and some that got dropped. It did not affect the Johnson or Connell medals were not affected by this. Karen will work with Colin to figure out a fix for this. They will figure out a resolution to this.

The 2024 CHD is out and I've only received a couple of emails for potential corrections, most due to spelling variations.

We did have one hybridizer who had some SBE entries that were not intended to be released slip through and get printed in the CHD. Clerical errors happen and one more line of defense against this is to have the hybridizers email Karen a list of varieties that are NOT intended for inclusion in the upcoming CHD by early October of the show year.

Blooms submitted for reclassification will be organized and sent out to the committee members in advance of the show season. Any additional blooms in need of a look for reclassification need to be submitted to Karen before June 1.

Karen thanked all for their support and prayers while her son went through a heart transplant. She hopes to be able to be more responsive to emails now that he is home and the recovery process can begin.

Cut Flower

Jess Becker reports in their first meeting of the year, they touched on what they want to do for the national show; Wayne Lobaugh is helping to coordinate a space for us. I'm anticipating our set-up will be similar to what we had at the Portland national show.

They're also actively working on putting together a category for shows specific to cut flowers after getting a handful of requests from people. They will be sharing this once they nail it down a bit more.

They also talked through other topics including expanding the committee a bit to find someone who enjoys writing (as it isn't her strong suit) so Jess is looking into a couple of recommendations for that.

Editor

Linda DeRooy Holmes-Cook reports the April 2024 *Bulletin* is in the hands of our production manager, Colin Walker, in the final stages of placement and set up. We are on schedule for it to arrive in the homes of members sometime during the first week of April. We had overwhelming participation in the *Bulletin* this issue. We received club reports from 36 local affiliates.

I submitted my notice to retire as editor of the *Bulletin* effective following the completion of the December 2024 issue. I submitted the following in my "From the Editor" column in the April 2024 *Bulletin*: With a new season comes change at the *Bulletin*. Earlier this month, I submitted notice of my intent to retire from my position as the editor of The *Bulletin* by the end of 2024. I will have been your editor for 8 years. The time has come for me to pass the torch to someone new, someone who possesses the passion and the skills to provide our members with this important resource. Brad Freeman, Colin Walker, and I would love to talk with anyone who has an interest in taking on this very influential role. The *Bulletin* is one of ADS's most valuable member benefits. ADS history goes back over a hundred years and since our founding, the *Bulletin* has been there to keep members informed, as a platform for sharing dahlia culture and connecting other dahlia people across the continent and other parts of the world. We know that there is a lot of talent out there – we see it every day.

If this sounds like something you'd like to do or find out more about, please let one of us know as soon as possible. We want to provide training with the two remaining 2024 issues in August and December. Hands-on experience will prove to be the most important part of this transition. I am absolutely completing my tenure with the December 2024 issue, and we know that my replacement is out there. We would consider the possibility of appointing co-editors, if there are a couple people with the necessary skills and/or experience and interest in taking on this role. To indicate interest or get more information, please contact Colin Walker at colinwalker@gmail.com, Brad Freeman at president@dahlia.org, or Linda DeRooy Holmes-Cook at adsbulletin@dahlia.org

It is hoped that this position is filled without delay, so that the new person or people can have the experience of putting the August and December issues together from start to finish. Please let me know if you have ideas for anyone who would like to fill this position.

On another note, speaking on behalf of the publications committee, Colin Walker asked me to mention that the 2024 *Classification Guide and Handbook of Dahlias* arrived in member homes last week. The book is slightly larger in dimension

Finance

Harry Risetto reports the following:

- 2023 was a positive year in terms of finances and membership.
- 2024 has had an encouraging start.
- The executive committee has been seeking a cost-effective procedure to permit individuals and societies to test for virus.
- The genome project is proceeding according to plan and has garnered positive support.
- A new communication system called Google Workspace is being introduced to facilitate, among other things, more effective financial communications.
- The committee recommends that all important data including membership and finances be added to Google Workspace to provide real time access.

The committee also recommends that all significant data be backed up to prevent loss. Backup should reside in separate data storage, such as Google Drive, with appropriate security access for sensitive items.

Garden Dahlias

Alan Fisher reports both the American Dahlia Society and numerous local societies have been trying to attract additional flower lovers to include dahlias among their desired plantings. A problem our committee has had is that “garden dahlia” means something different to every dahlia grower. One definition is short, stocky dahlias that bring color to landscape plantings. A second definition is dahlias that are vigorous, produce many blooms, grow under many different climatic conditions, and make numerous tubers that keep well. A third definition is dahlias that tend to grow short and can be grown easily in containers on a patio or balcony. A fourth definition is dahlia cultivars that produce attractive blooms that lack one or more criteria essential to performing well according the ADS judging criteria. Our first step must be to narrow the definition of “garden flower” so that we can generate some agreement. Our current recommendation is to subdivide the garden dahlia focus into at least the four narrow definitions above. We propose to have subcommittees based on each of the definitions and ask each subcommittee to incorporate each definition into a form to attract new members. Ideally we can generate definitions and criteria to work toward including each type of garden dahlia into dahlia shows or gardens. We shall need help identifying ADS volunteers to head the subcommittees. As the subcommittees make progress, they may evolve into separate ADS committees.

One proposal we are promoting is based on the fourth concept above, attractive cultivars that are highly unlikely to win more than a blue ribbon in competition. For a variety of reasons, the others are not as easily evaluated at a show. Select a few such cultivars and make these available to gardeners who find the cultivars attractive but have not been willing to focus on dahlias or to enter dahlia shows. Give them an opportunity to grow these cultivars, bring blooms to a show or meeting, and have experienced gardeners evaluate them without using ADS judging standards. The

difference between this approach and a novice class is that we would relax the ADS judging criteria in evaluating entries for this experiment. We believe that working with this definition is a natural way to start. Alan proposes a special competition at a local society show or meeting for garden dahlias from a group of pre-selected cultivars, which the society can offer numerous tubers and plants. This section would be open to new and inexperienced growers, those who have not exhibited before, novices, juniors, and other fairly new growers. He would exclude all ADS accredited and senior judges and anyone who has won best in section at a previous dahlia show. For judges, he would look to artistic design and garden club judges, not ADS accredited and senior judges.

The idea is to view the entries as an experienced gardener and artistic design arranger, someone who would evaluate the blooms by general aesthetic criteria rather than by ADS judging standards. He suggests limiting entries to no more than two entries per exhibitor, and not more than one of any cultivar. He would ask the judges to select a first and second from each cultivar and then select a best, second, and third overall from the remaining first and second place entries of each cultivar. (The best in section would need to have won a first for that cultivar, but second and third could have been first or second for their cultivar in this section.) The winner of this competition would not be eligible for any higher awards, and the results would not be included in the CHD. He has proposed trying this experiment either at the NCDS early mini show on August 18 or at a meeting in September or October. If the experiment proves to be popular and encourages growers and members who have not been entering dahlia shows, the next step would be to take the idea to the show committee at our society. Laura will propose to her board to include a section for garden dahlias in her society's August show. She will encourage new members to try and enter the category. She will discuss with board members the best way to judge the category with either viewer's choice or fellow club members who have talent in arrangement and design. The hope is that this will provide us an opportunity to reach out to flower lovers whom ADS and local societies may be missing with our current show approaches.

Image Library

Heather Ramsay reports it's the quiet time of the year for the Image Library, but she is looking forward to the upcoming season with some changes making things more accessible through Google Drive and some improvements to the New Introductions program.

Insurance

Mel Epstein reports the current general liability policy for ADS and its subscribing societies expires on March 15, 2024. In early January of 2024 we learned that the insurance company we were using for many years was no longer going to write blanket club liability insurance and we needed to find another insurer before the current policy lapsed. To make a long story short, with the help of Mercer/AMBA, our long-time broker, we have insurance bound for March 15, 2024, which is an improvement over the previous policy. The insurance will now cover our Canadian Societies on an equal basis with the US societies, has almost double the aggregate coverage, and has other features that will give the subscribing societies and ADS better protection.

This year the applications are once again online on the ADS website and Sharen Swaney has been able to completely automate the process. Once the PayPal payment

is made the chapter immediately gets a payment receipt, insurance confirmation, a fillable COI application with instructions and an explanatory document about the insurance coverage and its exclusions. The website module was available several days ago and signup has been going briskly with fifteen completed society applications being processed in that brief period of time.

Judging Accreditation

Bob Schroeder reports the annual accreditation judging report has been completed and is being prepared to be included on the ADS website. March 2023 to March 2024, has been a busy year for new and advancing judges. Over that period, fifty-three members entered the judging program as candidates, twenty-six advanced to the accredited judge level, and ten members acquired the top level of judging as senior judges. There are eight who have chosen to move to the honorary senior judge's position; we appreciate the time and effort all have put into the judging program. I believe the large participation in the judging program may be attributed to the release of the judges training modules. The committee, the mod squad, responsible for the production of the training modules, is currently working to produce a training module with a detailed explanation of judging at an ADS trial garden, release to be announced at a later date.

The ADS judges testing committee has completed the candidate judges test which is located on the ADS website. The test is taken online with test results given immediately. Once again, the decision to use the test is decided by the judging chairs of each society. The committee is in the final stage of a new accredited test, which like the candidate test, will be online. The release date will be announced.

Membership

The 2024 renewals and new memberships are starting to pick up. It appears that about half of the dahlia societies are waiting until March or April to send in their 2024 ADS dues. We had 847 new memberships in 2023, 713 Individual memberships and 134 household members. Of these new members, there were 96 extended new individual memberships and 20 household extended memberships. The vast majority of these extended new memberships were from our website 91 of the 96 individual memberships and 18 of the 20 household memberships. An educated guess for the difference would be that it was too expensive to pay local society dues plus an additional \$45 for an extended membership where a new member would probably elect the lower rate of \$30 rather than paying \$45.

U.S. Membership

There have been 28 societies that have reported memberships of at least 10 members or more for 2024. We have 904 individual memberships and 229 household memberships paid for 2024. There are 151 new 2024 individuals and 25 new household memberships.

2023 memberships: We have 29 participating societies and 5 affiliated societies who have not yet paid for 2024. There are 1,144 Individual and 327 household memberships who have not yet renewed for 2024.

Canadian Membership:

Fraser Valley Dahlia Society has notified me that they are closing their dahlia society so their members have been joining other dahlia societies. There may be some interest in trying to reopen the society.

4 of 8 dahlia societies have sent in their 2024 dues. There are 49 individual memberships, 19 print and 30 digital, and 12 household memberships – 9 print and 3 digital. Canada had 3 new members who joined ADS in 2024.

2023 memberships: There are 73 individual memberships and 29 family memberships plus 4 dahlia societies who have not yet renewed for 2024.

Overseas membership:

We have eight overseas memberships for 2024. There are seven 2023 memberships who have not yet renewed for 2024.

National Exhibition

A committee has been formed to assist in finding societies to host a national show. The committee includes:

- Harry Risetto, National Capital Dahlia Society
- Dan Baulig, Portland Dahlia Society
- Jerry Moreno, Dahlia Society of Ohio
- Jo Jepsen, West Michigan Dahlia Society
- Larry Smith, Portland Dahlia Society
- Terry Schroeder, Washington State Dahlia Society
- Brad Freeman, Puget Sound Dahlia Association
- Arthur Haskins, Nova Scotia Dahlia Society
- Bob Schroeder Chair, Washington State Dahlia Society

Presently the committee is putting a folder together with templates of past national show information to be used by societies in planning their show.

On Feb. 24th I received an email from the President of the West Michigan Dahlia Society, requesting to host the 2026 national show.

New Society Coordinator

Sarina Lagor reports she has been generating interest via several gardening and dahlia related Facebook groups, and have had three new inquiries through this method of advertising.

One dahlia society, the Fraser Dahlia Society in British Columbia, submitted an application to reinstate their dahlia society.

Initial Contact	Name	Location	Contact	Source	Notes
12/13/23	Ann Kersh	Post Falls, ID	akersh89@yahoo.com	Direct email	Uninterested, said it was too much work,

					might join Inland Empire
1/24/24	Sharon Kincaid	Fraser Dahlia Society	sharon.studs@gmail.com	Direct email	Sent in application
1/29/24	Danielle Martens	Iowa	dmartens81@yahoo.com	FB Groups	Sent new society packet, answered initial questions
1/30/24	Tina Linder	Unknown	tinamlindner@gmail.com	FB Groups	Sent new society packet, answered initial questions
2/27/24	Gia Card	Knoxville Dahlia Society	willowdesign2002@yahoo.com	Direct email	sent initial email and one follow up, never heard back
3/1/24	Yolanda Pepke	Nebraska	ysantos80@gmail.com	FB Groups	Sent new society packet, answered initial questions

Photography

Debbie Pavich reports the photo contest consists of two formats: the people's choice photo contest and ADS photo contest. Photos for both contests are submitted online to the contest email address.

Forty-four photos were submitted to the people's choice contest and posted on the ADS website. Sharon sent a mass email announcing the contest and over 200 ADS members voted for the winners.

Over 900 photos were submitted in 10 categories or "classes" for the ADS photo contest. Our dahlia friends are quite talented and the job of judging is more challenging. Thank you to all participants and the team of judges. Larry created videos of all classes and winning photos including the people's choice photos. The winners are announced on the website and Instagram page. Winning photos will be published in the Bulletin. Thank you, Larry, Sharon, Anna, Linda, and Colin for all your help.

With the change of the *Bulletin* publication schedule, I did have requests to submit photos after the deadline. Although the contest was publicized on the website, social media sites, and through an email to ADS reps, I extended the deadline two weeks.

Another complaint is the file transfer size is too small, requiring multiple emails. The rules will be changed to allow contestants to submit photos however they want including google, Dropbox, etc. Debbie is looking into software that photo clubs use for their contests. Photos are submitted and the photos are blinded (names removed) and categorized for judging. All judging is done through the program rather than sending

files to the judges. If anyone is interested in helping Debbie evaluate software send her a message at adsphotocontest@dahlia.org

Jessica has set up a file for all contest photos. There is an Excel spreadsheet with names of who submitted the photo. The file is on the ADS Google drive.

Larry sent out an email with the links to the videos. Please share them with your club. They are beautiful and fun to watch during a meeting, particularly in winter months. The photos are cheerful reminders of the past season and the hope of the new season.

Publicity/Public Relations

Larry Smith reports most of his efforts were spent creating videos including all 900+ of the ADS photo contest entries, one for each of the 10 categories and people's choice and a short reel featuring the best in show winners. They are relatively short and would be great to play at club meetings. Please help by sharing the links on social media or sharing with anyone who might enjoy them.

Class 1-Seedlings <https://youtu.be/ep3WLQbQzV8>

Class 2-Portrait <https://youtu.be/iWiHGAjC5a0>

Class 3-Multiple Bloom <https://youtu.be/u-3fpPcpr8>

Class 4-Garden <https://youtu.be/0Zq6opoEtXq>

Class 5-Shows & Personalities <https://youtu.be/jQAGbgpfWsw>

Class 6-Arrangements <https://youtu.be/HLQbuX62irE>

Class 7-Kids <https://youtu.be/wW9DB0IkS-Q>

Class 8-Critters https://youtu.be/uTPuRxiw_bc

Class 9-Macro <https://youtu.be/ml7o6GilGz0>

Class 10-Digital Darkroom <https://youtu.be/dGfslWJAJM>

People's Choice <https://youtu.be/uKfXYmkfJFA>

Best in Show <https://youtu.be/0YGLhtcsFPI>

Sharon has asked if they can be included on the website and Jess Becker has offered to do some promotion.

Larry has also offered to help with promotion and act as publicity consultant for the 2024 National Show in Wenatchee but has not yet been contacted. This offer is also extended to any future upcoming national show committee.

If anyone is aware of other ways that could drum up some positive PR for the ADS, contact Larry.

Research and Education

Virus

Ron Miner reports the results of the 2023 virus testing program will be summarized in the April ADS *Bulletin*. The RNA viruses can be controlled by the procedures already provided: "If in doubt, throw it out," "Clean Between," and "Start with Clean Stock." The ADS clubs that participated in the testing project exhibited RNA levels between 13% and 65% of the samples positive for virus. There is still plenty of room for improvement. There is evidence the same procedures are also able to control DMV and DMCV, the DNA viruses. However, the level of the DNA viruses present in club samples, most vendor samples, and team samples is much higher, running from 80% to 100% in most cases. The key problem with these DNA viruses is almost certainly finding clean stock!

Several vendors have demonstrated the ability to achieve low levels of DMV and DCMV in their gardens (0 to 10%) and we are in the process of discussing their procedures with them. One key element in their success is extensive testing to determine the stock is clean at the outset.

We have had discussions with Agdia, the testing company most commonly used for field and lab testing by the vendors. We were not successful in getting reduced cost tests for ADS members, but they did identify procedures that would help to reduce overall test costs. We will be discussing those approaches with the clubs when we meet with them soon.

Genome Sequencing

Kristine Albrecht provides some updates on the progress of various manuscripts and projects related to the ADS Dahlia Genome Project.

First, Zach completed the written portion of his PhD candidacy exams, which is a two-week affair where every professor on his committee asks him written questions about assorted topics. It is a rather grueling ordeal but represents a major milestone in Zach's PhD. He will take his oral exams in the next few months.

Manuscript 1: Dahlia phylogeny chapter. Zach has sequenced and analyzed a 24-library pilot of bait captured sequences (1000 loci). He shared his preliminary analysis of these data at the ADS show. He is now preparing libraries for the remaining ~200 DNAs, which includes nearly all Dahlia species in the genus in replicate. This is the largest genomic sampling of Dahlia species ever. He also recently opened up a collaboration with Eduardo Ruiz-Sanchez, who maintains a Dahlia collection at the Universidad de Guadalajara, and is currently collecting more tissue for Zach to fill out the phylogeny. This chapter will be crucial for our ability to understand the relationships of all species in the genus, and to build a better hypothesis for the parental origin of the cultivated octoploid.

Manuscript 2: The Dahlia Genome chapter. Zach has a draft assembly of the Dahlia genome completed. There are significant challenges with assembling an octoploid genome, though, especially one with multiple types of whole genome duplications in its history. In our November 2023 ADS board report, we were deciding whether to take an approach where we reduce the complexity of the Dahlia genome down to a single copy of every chromosome. Currently Zach is using a bioinformatics tool called "subphaser" which allows us to identify the different subgenomes, or separate sets of chromosomes, for the dahlia genome, and parse them out. We have currently identified one clear sub genome of likely related chromosomes that might serve as the final "dahlia genome". Zach has collected a diversity of tissue types from Edna C in order to annotate genes on these chromosomes, and we will begin sequencing those mRNA sequences soon. Lastly, Zach is isolating DNA from all 700 individuals from the 2021 ADS show and we will begin making sequencing libraries for them in January, in order to identify genes controlling major trait variation in diverse cultivars. We have identified the molecular method to do this at scale, and we can perform 96 DNA extractions at once, meaning that we will soon have the ability to scale this even higher.

In general, we are on track, and am pleased with Zach's progress as a PhD student. Zach is currently deeply embedded in bioinformatics analysis of the genome, and

molecular wetlab work to generate the species tree phylogeny, which will occupy most of his year as a 3rd year PhD student. He is currently on track to be a co-author on a microscopy manuscript that develops a simplified protocol to image flower buds across Asteraceae species like Dahlias, which will be Zach's first publication as a PhD student.

Seedling Bench Evaluation

Roger Walker reports the following

1. Information about 2024 seedling bench evaluation materials will be sent to clubs in June. Emails will be sent to all ADS club representatives as well as club presidents; only one will need to complete a simple online form. Needed materials will be sent prior to clubs' shows.
2. The materials are also posted on the ADS website.
3. Both ADS Seedling Award ribbons and ADS Achievement Award ribbons have been redesigned; as stock of the old design is exhausted, clubs will begin receiving the new versions. The redesigned ribbons will be less costly to ship.
4. Occasionally cultivars are inadvertently listed in the *Classification and Handbook of Dahlias* prior to their introduction, through no fault of the grower. While this should not affect the selection of upcoming Hart, Dudley, or Gullikson medals, I propose a rule be added to ensure hybridizers are not harmed. This rule would be:
 - a. Trial garden rule 11n
 - b. Seedling bench rule 17

Suggested draft: **Dahlia varieties listed in the *Classification and Handbook of Dahlias* prior to their dissemination because of ADS clerical errors will not have their eligibility for Hart, Dudley, or Gullikson medals affected.**

Social Media

Anna Kandra reports the current stats for ADS social media:

Facebook followers: 6,032

Facebook group members: 8,953

Instagram followers: 11,211

Special Awards

Jerry Landerholm reports the 2023 Johnson, Connell, Hart, Dudley and Gullikson Medals all received the required engraving and, along with congratulatory letters, have been sent to ADS Board Members who will make the presentations. As always, thanks again to our fellow board members who make these presentations special.

Technology Resource

Jess Becker reports almost everyone has switched to the new email system, however a number of people haven't checked their email in over a month.

Just a reminder - these don't forward to your personal emails. You have to login to check them. Some of you manage more than one account, if you need tips on how to easily flip between these in Chrome or want to add email to your phone, let me know

and I'm happy to help. Those who haven't checked their ADS email address recently should do so as you are likely missing messages.

At this point we're probably ready to explore switching GroupVine to Google groups which will be another change to the process but it should help with some of the GroupVine issues we've seen over the past couple of years.

There has been some adoption of Google Drive, and I'd encourage those who haven't been keeping their ADS files in our drive to move them over. I'm always happy to hop on a zoom if anyone needs help doing this.

Website Coordinator

Sharon Swaney states she wants to thank all her board friends who tried to bury her in information. It almost worked! Much information was added to the site since her last report. Here are some highlights:

Regular, seasonal information added/updated

- Seedling Bench
- Fab 50/ Cream of the Crop
- Awards to Blooms
- Minutes
- Society info (We need societies to take more interest in keeping their information up to date.) Also, per request, I am trying to add city names to society listings where the location is not obvious.
- Genome
- Store Updates
- Trial Garden pictures and results
- Judging information

Functionality added

- Member Talent Survey
- Online insurance purchase capability updated and slightly enhanced.
- New Intros announced and presentations posted.

Photo Contests

- People's Choice – selections posted, voting enabled, results posted
- ADS Photo Contest – winners announced, videos of all the entries posted
- I enjoy this information because I get lots of new photos for the website!

Online Configuration Guide

- Some new intros added.
- Don Filand continues to work on photos (thanks Don!)
- Still some corrections still to be made.

Keep the information flowing!

OLD BUSINESS

Spring Planning & Board meeting

Bob reported he has contacted the president of the Minnesota Dahlia Society. She contacted the person who is in charge of organizing the hotel. When making plane reservations, you should fly into Minneapolis St. Paul airport.

National Show

Bob reports there was a committee formed for national shows. Recently, West Michigan Dahlia Society has requested to host the 2026 National Show. West Michigan has sent in their formal request and deposit. Rochester Dahlia Society has just decided to host a national show in 2027 but has not sent in a formal request. There was a suggestion to have an information at future national shows with information about hosting national shows and promote it at the banquet. The committee has made great progress.

Strategic Plan Update

Alli reports that the committee going over the ideas brainstormed at the 2023 spring planning meeting is making great progress. They will provide a summation at the 2024 spring planning meeting. They have a folder on the google drive where they are putting their information. The goal is to wrap up at the spring planning meeting to give us some areas to focus on over the next several years.

Google Drive

Jess reports that the majority of board members have activated their Gmail accounts. The google drive is starting to be utilized; several board members have been putting information into the files on google drive. It was requested to have all the email addresses for the board loaded into Gmail automatically. You should be able to import a csv file into your Gmail account. You would need to export the board contact list to a csv file and then import that into your contacts. Jess explained that Google Workspace includes everything that Google offers. Docs is equal to a word document, sheets is equal to an excel spreadsheet. All of our information is being held in a drive. Our information is in a shared drive. There are a few shared drives there but not all are available to everyone. The drive labeled American Dahlia Society is where most of our information is saved that everyone is able to see. The next big transition would be to get off GroupVine and move to Google Groups. There was discussion about using Google Drive to place reports prior to the board meeting. Jess made a folder in the secretary folder to place the reports for today's meeting. There will be a sub-folder in the secretary folder for each board meeting where officers, regional vice-presidents and committee chairs will place their reports.

Logo Use Policy

Brad stated he has a request from someone who wants to use the ADS logo on their personal Facebook page to show they were a member of the ADS. We had a logo, which was taken down in order to revise it. Brad drafted a policy about the logo. **Harry Risetto moved and Bob Schroeder seconded to approve the logo policy. The motion carried.** We need to add a person to contact to get the current logo files or

questions about the use of the ADS logo. The policy is on the google drive under logos. logo policy with the date of 3-11-2024. Sharon will be the keeper of the files at this time.

Extended Membership

Brad stated that Elva feels we need to change the period for the extended membership because we changed the Bulletin publication from June to August. There was supposed to be a task force to look at this issue, but that did not get done. Brad feels that it would be important to have the task force look at this issue carefully. **Elva moves, and Mark Oldenkamp seconded to change the extended membership date to July 1 to February 28. Bob Schroeder moved and Linda DeRooy Holmes-Cook moved to table the motion on the table. The motion to table the original motion carried.** The original goal was to entice new members and perhaps there is another solution to accomplish that goal. The task force should determine the effect on the ADS of any proposal on our normal single-year renewal. We will develop a proposal for discussion at the June meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Bulletin Editor Search

Mark reports he has received a job description from Linda, which he will share with Colin, Alli and Brad. We will try to assimilate it into a white paper format to answer questions of potential candidates. We have had one candidate express interest, based on the plea that went out publicly. They wanted to wait until they received the job description from Linda before moving forward. They are making some headway. Linda reports she will be done at the end of 2024. She would like to have the new person work with Linda on both the August and December issues and take over at the beginning of 2025. We need to have someone in place by June 1. If you know of someone who has an interest/talent in this area, please let Linda, Brad or Mark know.

Talent Search

Brad reports there had been some discussion about trying to determine the talent within the ADS and he set up a survey. There have been several responses and he has been pleased with the results. We have several areas of talent including graphic design, website design, fundraising, etc. We are not finished with this; we will work on this more at the June meeting. We can likely add some of these people to existing committees. There is a lot of digital technology stuff, which is where we want to go. There's a lot of information, with a good geographic dispersion across the US and Canada.

Classification & Handbook of Dahlias

Roger Walker reports he was contacted by a grower that got into the CHD for 2024 that he did not want released until 2025, which means he would not be eligible for a medal in 2024. Dahlias that are undisseminated and accidentally get into the CHD. **Roger Walker moved, and Ron Miner seconded the motion that dahlia varieties listed in the *Classification and Handbook of Dahlias* prior to their dissemination because of ADS clerical errors will not have their eligibility for Hart, Dudley, or Gullikson medals affected. This rule is to take effect immediately and be published in the 2025 CHD. The motion passed.**

National Show Fund

Brad reports that one of the issues that societies have encountered in trying to host a national show is putting together the seed money. The primary barriers are seed money, enough people, and an appropriate venue. Currently, the ADS provides a host society \$3400, which comes out of our general fund. The idea is to create a national show fund. We can use money out of that fund to make available up to \$7000. The goal would be to raise at least \$100,000.00. **Mark Oldenkamp moves, and Linda DeRooy Holmes-Cook to approve the national show fund proposal as written. The motion passed. The proposal is:**

Purpose

The primary purpose of the endowment fund is to provide funding to local/regional dahlia organizations who are hosting an ADS National Show.

Guidelines/Goals

The goal of the initial fund-raising campaign is \$100,000.

The endowment fund will be managed by the finance committee with oversight by the board. The monies in the fund should be invested to provide an annual revenue stream. The goal for the endowment fund is for it to be self-sufficient where annual expenditures do not exceed the annual earnings.

Local/regional dahlia organizations, approved to host a national show, can request up to \$7,000 from the endowment fund subject to the availability of funds. The current practice of providing \$3,400 (which currently comes from the general operating fund) to a host society will continue until such time that the finance committee determines there are sufficient funds in the National Show Endowment to stop the practice.

The monies provided to a national show host organization should be used to offset the initial costs of hosting a national show such as deposits for meeting spaces, bus rentals, etc. The agreement with the host organization will stipulate that they will return a minimum of 10% of the net earnings from the show back to the endowment fund.

The ADS board should consider selling merchandise (hats, shirts, aprons, etc.) with an approved ADS logo with the proceeds of those sales going into the endowment fund.

If after five years the endowment fund does not have sufficient funds to provide a sufficient annual revenue stream, then the monies in the endowment fund can be returned to the general operating fund. The decision to do so will be made by the Board based on a recommendation by the Finance committee.

There was a suggestion to have the ADS provide some money from the general fund to go into this account. It was also suggested that we would also look at some specific fundraising efforts to get to this number quickly. As an endowment, this would need to be a restricted fund. The national show committee endorses the proposal. There was discussion about using the same platform that was used for the fundraising done for the genome project. Likely, a goal of \$200,000 is a minimum that would be needed. At this

time, we want to get this started; the money can be adjusted as needed. The finance committee will work on the variables.

Approval of West Michigan Dahlia Society to Host the 2026 National Show

Bob Schroeder reports he received an email from Jeff Miner, president of the West Michigan Dahlia Society, requesting to host the 2026 national show in Grand Rapids, Michigan at the Frederik Meyer Garden. **Ron Miner moved, and Linda DeRooy Holmes-Cook seconded to approve the West Michigan Dahlia Society's request to host the 2026 national show. The motion passed.**

Policy for Censuring Judges

Bob report that he recently received information about a senior judge who was demoted to accredited status due to misconduct. It was felt the judge needed to be removed from the judging program. However, the current policy set by the ADS does not provide any guidelines for censuring, demoting, or removing a recognized judge. There is a procedure to reinstate a judge that has been demoted. There is no information about censuring, how to demote or removal of a judge.

Bob's recommendation is when a society or conference board of directors receives a grievance from its judges or members, regarding the actions of an active judge, the board must take prompt and decisive action by investigating the complaint. The credibility of the society or conference is at risk, and it is imperative to maintain the trust and confidence of its members. By addressing grievances in a timely and effective manner, the board of directors can demonstrate its commitment to ensuring fairness and upholding ethical standards. If a complaint is found to be valid after investigation, the first action that may be taken is the censure or demotion of the individual to the next lower-level judging status. If the judge continues with the inappropriate action, the governing board of the group may choose to remove that judge from their judging program. It was felt there should be information as to the types of behavior that would be expected; there is information in the *Guide to Judging Dahlias* regarding the decorum of judges. That information could be suggested to set some standards of judges' decorum. There was also discussion about our insurance not covering credentialling. It is felt there should be a right to appeal included in the policy. After discussion, it was decided this may be something we want to consider but we need to make sure it is something that is workable for our organization. It is felt there could be some liability for the organization.

It was brought up about Coseytown Dahlias setting up a term of use policy about purchasing and then reselling her releases. It might be a good discussion in the future for the board.

Charles Miehme moved and Ron Miner seconded to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 3:31 pm PDT.

The next meeting will be in Minnesota June 7 to 9, 2024.

Respectively Submitted,

Terry Schroeder, ADS Secretary