

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 am PDT by First President Brad Freeman.

### **Present**

Board members present were Brad Freeman, Mark Oldenkamp, Ken Jensen, Terry Schroeder, Charles Miehm, Jerry Landerholm, Harry Rissetto, Ron Miner, Lori Goehring, John Morton, Alli Richards, Karen Sanchez, Wayne Lobaugh, Linda DeRooy Holmes-Cook, Alan Fisher, Mel Epstein, Bob Schroeder, Elva Sellens, Debbie Pavich, Larry Smith, Roger Walker. Several members from local and distant dahlia societies were in attendance.

### **Introductory Remarks**

Brad Freeman welcomed everyone to this year's annual meeting and national show in Wenatchee, WA. He provided the following report on accomplishments.

**Strategic Plan** - Over the past two years the ADS Board has been working on a strategic plan for the ADS. The work began with a survey of the ADS members in 2022. Last winter a committee led by Alli Richards was tasked with finalizing the details of the ADS strategic plan. The strategic plan was adopted by the ADS Board at their in-person meeting in Minnesota in June. A key component of the strategic plan is the list of action items that ADS Board will be working on over the next several years. The strategic plan can be found in the minutes of the Board meeting available in the members only section of the ADS website.

**"Talent Search"** – there is need for the additional volunteers to help the ADS Board accomplish what is set forth in the strategic plan. Without your help it will be challenging for the ADS to continue to grow and evolve. Many members answered last winter's talent survey which the ADS leadership will be using to fill volunteer positions as they open.

**National Show Endowment Fund** – this fund was established with a goal of raising \$150,000. The primary purpose of the endowment fund is to provide grants to local/regional dahlia organizations who are hosting an ADS National Show. The funds should be used for the initial costs associated with a national show such as a down payment to secure a show venue. The hope is that with this new funding source more dahlia organizations will see that it is feasible to host a national show. Currently, the funds that the ADS provides the dahlia organizations for national shows come from the general fund instead of a dedicated funding source. If you want to continue the legacy of ADS National Shows, please contribute to the fund through the donation page on the ADS website.

**Membership** - significant changes to the types of memberships and the membership year were adopted in 2022. This has been a source of some confusion over the past couple of years. A new member policy was adopted in May of this year to clarify the benefits that new members received. The current leadership of the ADS realizes that additional work is needed to streamline the process for collecting, entering, and managing the membership data. A committee will begin work this fall to investigate available technologies and platforms for managing memberships. The goal for the

committee is to make a recommendation on how to streamline the membership process to the ADS Board at their in-person meeting in March 2025.

**Presidency** - This is the last ADS Annual Meeting that I will be addressing as President. It has been an honor to serve as your President over the last six years. With the support of the ADS Board much has been accomplished over the past few years. For me, the high point was when the new *Bulletin* was produced and delivered to the ADS members. Finally, the ADS has a publication in full color to celebrate the flower we love. The new leadership of the ADS will be taking the reins this fall, please, give them your full support.

### Minutes

**Mark Oldenkamp moved, and Bob Schroeder seconded to approve the minutes from the 2023 Annual Meeting, August 27, 2023, as written. The motion passed.**

### OFFICERS REPORTS

#### Treasurer

Charles Miehme reported we are in good financial condition. With one more *Bulletin* to print, our income to August 31, 2024, is \$81,322.73 and expenses were \$52,870.08 for a net surplus of \$28,452.65. Below is the balance sheet, as of August 31, 2024, for our accounts. If anyone has any questions, please contact Charles.

#### **Balance Sheet - 08/31/2024**

##### **Unrestricted Funds**

Ameriprise Investment Account (unrestricted)	\$ 6,014.17
Vanguard Investment Account (unrestricted)	\$ 40,530.22
Wells Fargo Bank – checking - operating (unrestricted)	\$ 86,962.81
<b>Total Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b><u>\$133,507.20</u></b>

##### **Restricted Funds**

Ameriprise Investment Account – Boeke Bequest	\$ 43,586.72
Wells Fargo Bank – checking account – Virus Fund	\$ 9,393.84
Wells Fargo Bank – checking account – 2025, 2026, 2027 National Shows	\$ 425.00
Wells Fargo Bank – checking account – Tony Evangelista Memorial Fund	\$ 5,425.00
Wells Fargo Bank – checking account – Memorial Fund	\$ 450.00
Wells Fargo Bank – checking account – National Show Endowment Fund	\$ 18,428.31
Wells Fargo Bank – savings account – Genome Project	\$ 75,012.31
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b><u>\$ 152,721.24</u></b>

**It was moved and seconded to approve the treasurer's report subject to review.  
The motion passed.**

Charles reported he received fifty-seven ballots, all voting for the slate of officers as nominated. The new slate of officers that were elected for the coming year, starting November 1, 2024, through October 31, 2026 are as follows:

President	Mark Oldenkamp
First Vice-President	Linda DeRooy Holmes-Cook
Second Vice-President	Allison Richards
Third Vice-President	Ken Jensen
Secretary	Theresa Schroeder
Treasurer	Charles Miehme

### **First Vice-President**

Mark Oldenkamp reports he has been giving a lot of thought to what he would share as we approach a change in leadership roles. The absolute message he feels strongly about is the significance of the leadership team's effort to modernize the American Dahlia Society. The past six years under the leadership of Brad, as President, we have made significant strides forward. His dedication to this effort may not be as clear to others as I have witnessed, but he and I have spent quite a lot of time, sharing thoughts and strategy and I know the commitment he has made. He has set the bar quite high.

Embracing the Executive Committee leadership structure has made the work easier. The financial reporting improvements, the membership adjustments, the new *Bulletin* with more color, the excellent judges training modules, the updated *Guide to Judging Dahlias* and the genome project are all examples of outputs, but there are many other positive outcomes. New leaders have joined the team, and their contributions have been good.

COVID certainly encouraged innovation in how we use technology, and this will continue. The significant increase in membership appears to be an unintended benefit largely due to COVID. We are learning that exhibiting dahlias competitively is not for everyone as there are other ways to appreciate the colorful bounty. The strategic planning process has set us on a path for more needed refinements as to how we serve our members. This is a time to celebrate these positives and to resolve that change has been and can be necessary and good. I am proud to have been a part of these chapters and thank all our leaders for their input and support.

As we pass the baton, I am keenly aware of the need for us to seek out new leaders for our future. As we all know, and some days feel, none of us are getting younger.

Let's enjoy our time at this National Show and appreciate the work that many have done to make this happen. As we celebrate with our dahlia friends, old and new, please consider how we can encourage the full implementation of the National Show Endowment Fund. This fund will one day be the source of seed money to aid more societies to host a National Show. Thank you for the positive start to this drive and the knowledge that all contributions, small or large, are appreciated. Special thanks to those who have made generous matching donation pledges to help us grow this fund.

## **Second Vice-President**

Alli Richards reports While she has only been in this position since the unfortunate passing of Tony Evangelista, I feel that the ADS Board has welcomed me with open arms. I am so honored to be a part of this enthusiastic, talented team.

I was tasked with chairing the strategic planning committee to utilize the work started in Denver, CO in 2022. It was a pleasure to collaborate with such a knowledgeable team. Their breadth of knowledge in so many areas outside our beloved dahlia was immensely helpful. They brought their dahlia passion to every planning meeting and discussion. We presented a strategic plan to the ADS Board at the spring planning meeting in Minnesota, MN this June. That plan was passed as the strategic plan for the ADS for the next three to five years. The biggest focus is on increasing member/club benefits and engagement. There is a plan to start a citizen science program with projects that can be applied to judging advancement projects. An example of a project could be what forms, varieties, additives, provide the best vase life? If you are interested in helping with a committee or project, please reach out to me or any of the ADS Board members.

I'm looking forward to serving as the 2nd Vice President with this dynamic leadership team. It has been a pleasure to serve with outgoing ADS President, Brad Freeman. I look forward to all the exciting improvements and enhancements, both planned and unplanned, coming up for 2025!

## **THIRD VICE-PRESIDENT**

Ken Jensen reports Canada is doing well. There are many Canadian members who attended the national show this year.

## **REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS**

### **North Atlantic Conference**

Robert Fackovec reports all of their member societies have been busy growing and getting ready for their shows. The shows are always a lot of work but also a lot of fun. Good luck to everyone participating in them!

The Yankee Dahlia Society from Massachusetts has discontinued its society functions. All the societies in the North Atlantic Conference and throughout the ADS wish them all the best.

### **Midwest Dahlia Conference**

The Midwest Dahlia Conference is in full swing as to everything "Dahlias"! This past Saturday was our Annual Midwest Dahlia Conference Meeting and Plant Auction in Elkhart, IN. Our host again for this event was the Elkhart DS. They do know how to put on a special time. Plants came from throughout the conference for the auction. The day opened at 10AM with the meeting followed by a "Panel of dahlia growers" answering questions from the membership. The panel was comprised of Warren Vigor of the Elkhart DS, Missy Weitzel of the West Michigan DS, and John Williams of the Greater Pittsburgh DS. A delicious buffet luncheon followed and allowed time for all to catch up with old and new friends alike. Jim Kassner was again our auctioneer and kept it lighthearted yet moving at a fast pace. He garnered a record amount of proceeds to help the Elkhart DS to host the MDC Show. The Elkhart DS presented their summary of the upcoming Midwest Dahlia Conference Fall Show in Shipshewana, IN. The show will

be held from September 13-15, where exhibitors from the entire conference will gather. The Midwest Dahlia Conference is ready for the 2024 dahlia season! Thank You to the membership of the Elkhart DS for a fun day!

### **Mid-Atlantic Dahlia Conference**

Dave Smith reports members of The Mid-Atlantic Conference comprised of Gettysburg Dahlia Society, National Capital Dahlia Society, and The Greater Philadelphia Dahlia Society, adopted a common entry tag to be used at their shows.

### **The Greater Philadelphia Dahlia Society**

At their March 30 meeting, they had a demonstration and discussion about taking dahlia cuttings. Attendance was excellent, reflecting their increased membership. They held their most successful annual tuber sale ever on May 11 in front of the Longwood Gardens Visitors Center. This was no doubt due to a number of factors: It was Mother's Day weekend, bringing a huge crowd to the gardens; the weather was perfect; the many new members brought themselves and their donated tubers, swelling the number of tubers we had to sell; they decided to maintain the very low price of \$5 per tuber; and the popularity of the dahlia continues to grow!

On a sad note, longtime member Sylvia Green passed away on May 8. Sylvia had hosted two of our annual picnics at her beautiful home in the last ten years. She loved gardening and dahlias in particular. Her enthusiasm and friendly demeanor will be greatly missed.

Their annual picnic and judging seminar is planned for August 24. The annual dahlia show is September 7 and 8 at Longwood Gardens.

### **National Capital Dahlia society**

At their March 13 meeting, Nick Weber demonstrated dahlia cuttings and they had a first tuber sale.

On March 28, a long-time ADS member and friend and long-time NCDS member, Don Dramstad, passed away. Don served in the past as president of both NCDS and the American Dahlia Society, was a long-time senior judge, and an accomplished dahlia grower. Beyond these official roles, Don was a great friend and mentor to members in the dahlia world. He was always willing to share his vast knowledge in growing, showing, and judging dahlias. He will be deeply missed.

At our April 10 and May 8 meetings, they conducted a little business but most of the time was consumed by tuber sales.

On May 19, many members participated in their trial garden planting at the Montgomery County Agricultural History Farm Park in Derwood, MD.

NCDS will host a mid-summer show at the Montgomery County Agricultural History Farm Park at Derwood, MD August 25, and the fall show at Brookside Gardens on September 27-29, 2024.

### **Gettysburg Dahlia Society**

The Gettysburg dahlia society started the year with three meetings. The April meeting was held at a member's home for a potting party. Dahlias and pizza are a great combination. They potted up 140 tubers with a tag for their descriptions and 200 tubers in bags. The totals are not in yet, but they are very promising.

Gettysburg has four new members and a loss of two, who moved away. Their summer meeting will be a potluck at the Straban Township Park on Sunday June 9 from 11 am till it ends. Members bring a dish and GBS will supply the rest, and a guest speaker.

Their show dates are September 13 and 14, 2024. The venue will open for set up on the evening of Thursday, 9/12. Entries will be received Thursday night and Friday morning. David Walsh will be in charge of their design section this year, theme to follow.

### **Pacific Southwest Dahlia Conference**

John Morton reports it seems so strange that the dahlia shows are over already. Such anticipation and then it is preparation for next year.

We have been very pleased with the junior participants. It is good to see junior blooms in the shows. One elementary school junior has started a dahlia garden on her school grounds while another is trying to drum up help to do the same at their school. The Pacific Southwest Dahlia Conference is proud of these young people.

Although the San Diego Society was unable to have a show this year, they teamed up with the Rose Society for a cultural exchange which was successful. They have gone from a pre-covid eight members up to the present thirty-three members.

The Northern California Societies are doing well. Going to the shows John was amazed at the number of exhibitors he had never met as they are new to their societies. The societies are doing more physical outreach and are using social media as well.

### **Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers**

Alli Richards reports The Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers is excited to be hosting the 57<sup>th</sup> ADS National Show! They are looking forward to meeting all the dahlia enthusiasts.

This year they've had a couple shows run into venue-related problems that led to their shows' cancellation. We were very saddened to hear this news, but we will be ready to support their shows in 2025.

Our newest members and novices are having another stellar show season with many visits to the head table. We also have an increase in new members trying their hand at exhibiting in both the basket and arrangement category. They are doing quite well too! Everyone had a great time with the underwater arrangement class at the PSDA show the weekend of August 24 and 25 at Sky Nursery in Shoreline WA.

Prior to the start of our show season, which started on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, we had our summer workshop and then our judging workshop. The judging classes were held in the north and south of our region and were well attended. It was nice to see the newer members attend and get started on their judging journey.

Overall, the FNWDG is having a great year. Again, we have the most members ever! Our member clubs are doing a great job promoting the benefits of becoming a Federation member and everyone is loving and benefiting from the larger dahlia community outside their home clubs.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **ADS Store**

Dan Baulig reports orders continually arrive at the ADS Store:

Since the first of the year shipments from the store are as follows:

Color Guides - **44**, 2023 CHD - **31**, 2023 CHD Large 3-hole - **3**, 2024 CHD – **289**, 2024 Large 3 Hole CHD – **35**, Spiral Composite - **27**, 76-2022 3-hole Composite - **7**, Guide to Judging Dahlias – **80**, 2<sup>nd</sup> 50 Years – **3**, Show Tag Rings – **1**.

October 2022 *Bulletin* - 0, January 2023 *Bulletin* - **1**, June 2023 *Bulletin* – **4**, December 2023 *Bulletin* – **6**, April 2024 *Bulletin* – **11**, August 2024 *Bulletin* – **2**

### **Total Shipments from the ADS Store: 544 through August 2024**

Postage Rates have increased twice this year, along with supplies to ship the books causing price increases on all books.

### **Classification**

Karen Sanchez reports the classification committee met this morning and had no recommendations.

### **Cut Flower**

Wayne Lobaugh reports the cut flower committee is in the process of making a judge's training video for the farmers cut flower bunch. They are also seeking two more people to be on the committee. They are looking for cut flower growers that are skilled at writing and/or making quality videos.

### **Editor**

Linda DeRooy Holmes-Cook reports the August 2024 *Bulletin* arrived in most member homes the first week in August. We continue to be happy with the relationship and the timeliness with which Consolidated Press and Colin Walker have improved our ability to deliver this important member benefit. Kudos to both!

The deadline for the December 2024 *Bulletin* is October 1. This issue is usually full of reports from the National Show, as well as end-of-year wrap-ups. ADS affiliated societies are asked to get their local club show reports to Sharon, using the database she has developed for that purpose. These reports are now being published on the ADS website, in digital format only. Please do not send your club reports to the *Bulletin* Editor. Historically, club reports have not been published in the December issue due to the fact that show reports took precedence. Now that we are not doing a print edition of these reports, we will accept abbreviated society reports, with a focus on wrapping up the year, and/or sharing any innovative ideas that you used during the garden or show season. The length of the reports needs to be between 200-225 words. Photos sent by societies need to be high definition in order to avoid distortion or lack of clarity when published. The publication team includes Dianne Reitan and Debbie Pavich.

Our new Editor, Pat Looney from the Southwest Idaho Dahlia Society, will be taking on more responsibility with the December issue, and we look forward to turning everything over to her early in 2025. Thank you for your understanding during this transition.

Linda wants to express her gratitude to everyone in ADS for their support over her eight years as editor. She will continue to be active on the Board and to support the publications team. She sincerely thanks everyone.

### **Finance**

Harry Risetto reports:

- The finances of the ADS have improved and are stable, as a result of increased membership and changes implemented by ADS leadership.
- The need to encourage local societies to host national shows through increased financial start-up support is important for the ADS' future. The National Show Endowment Fund needs contributions from the dahlia community so the ADS can increase national visibility.
- The ADS must have the capacity to support and grow its local dahlia societies.
- The ADS should utilize technology in all aspects of its operation.
- The ADS should continue to expand its research activities, such as the virus and genome projects.
- The ADS should expand its efforts to attract bequests, grants and outside financial support.

### **Garden Dahlia**

Alan Fisher reports the committee is undergoing a transition.

1. Recently, the co-chair of the committee resigned, although she will still stay connected and make suggestions. Laura Fisher's communications and energy helped Alan greatly during the period when she was able to work with him as a co-chair. We are now looking for a new co-chair for this committee.
2. Despite many years of effort, going back to the original organization of this committee, there is no consensus among board members about how to define garden dahlias. The lack of a definition has been a major disadvantage in trying to find ways to broaden the appeal of dahlia shows to additional growers. (As one example, in some of our largest local dahlia societies, a small percentage of the members enter blooms at shows.) After discussion at the spring meeting in Minneapolis, the sense of the group was that we should not expend much effort on trying to define a garden dahlia. Rather, we should redirect this committee toward education and outreach. The primary focus should be on attracting gardeners and flower lovers who do not yet grow dahlias.
3. A focus on gardeners new to dahlias suggests that the garden dahlia committee would be better designated as the Committee for Outreach and Education. Our name and goal should be to attract people who are not yet growing dahlias. We should provide information to them to help them grow dahlias and eventually to learn more (such as learning how in the ADS we classify and judge dahlias).
4. For now, information of interest to those new to dahlias is scattered among several committees and not well organized on the ADS website. If this committee is to be a site for outreach and education, then we can use a co-chair well versed in internet use. This person could go through the internet and suggest what parts might go under an outreach and education banner. If a portion of the website should go under this banner



(perhaps, for example, Dahlia 101), then it could move there. If sections of other committees' work relate well to outreach and education, there should be references under outreach and education to those web locations, and we could request that the other committee chairs include a link to outreach and education. These links could benefit multiple committees within ADS.

5. Alan welcomes ADS members interested in joining this effort to contact me and to contact Mark Oldenkamp.

### **Image Library**

Heather Ramsay reports the Image Library is actively collecting photos from trial gardens and seedling bench evaluations. If you have any to share, please get in touch! We have had a couple responses from our request for help in the *Bulletin* from people who would like to actively contribute photos of dahlias and their people, but we would welcome more volunteers as well.

### **Insurance**

Mel Epstein reports this has been an eventful year for the insurance committee. This past January, just weeks before the club general liability policy was set to expire, we were notified by the New Hampshire Insurance Company that they were no longer writing club insurance and that our policy would not be renewed. With the help of our long-time agent Mercer/AMBA we were able to get a club general liability policy from Philadelphia Insurance, a wholly owned subsidiary of Tokai Marine. Founded in 1879, Tokai Marine operates worldwide in 47 countries and regions, with an annual revenue of approximately \$25 billion and is one of the twenty largest insurance companies in the world. With a marginal increase in premium, our new policy includes broader and greater coverage than the prior policy and includes Canadian societies.

To date this year, 43 US Societies have subscribed to this improved policy. Also, despite the short notice one of the largest Canadian societies is now participating in the ADS program. This shows that in the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.

### **Judging Accreditation**

Bob Schroeder reports that since the judges training modules were introduced on the ADS website, they have become extremely popular. They attract new members who are interested in joining the judging program and also provide a great way for established candidate, accredited, and senior judges to review judging practices.

The testing committee has finished developing an online judging test for candidate and accredited judges. The test can be found and taken online on the ADS website's member section. Individuals receive their test results immediately upon submission. If the club approves the test for judging requirements, individuals are required to provide the email address of their club/conference judging chair to receive credit. Currently, the testing committee is developing an online test for senior judges.

### **Membership**

Elva Sellens reports we are sorry to hear that the Yankee Dahlia Society has disbanded this summer. Dahlia Society of Wisconsin has been able to obtain enough ADS members to change from an affiliated society to a participating society. The Facebook and web page have been helpful in bringing in new members. We had 678 new U.S. memberships, 499 individual memberships and 179 household memberships (x 2 =

358) for a total of 857 new members. Of the 678 memberships, 73.6% were from dahlia societies and 26.4% were non-dahlia society members. Canada had 26 new individual memberships of which 4 were non-dahlia society members.

### **U.S. Memberships**

There are 56 participating societies and 3 affiliated societies. We have 2,342 memberships, 1,830 individual memberships and 513 household memberships (x 2 + 1,026) for a total of 2,856 U.S. members.

### **Canada Memberships**

There are 8 participating societies and 1 affiliated society in Canada. Fraser Valley Dahlia Society changed from a participating society to an affiliated society. We have 149 Canadian memberships of which 49 are digital memberships (32.8%), 120 individual memberships and 29 household memberships (x 2 = 58) for a total of 178 members.

### **Overseas**

There are 12 overseas memberships.

### **National Show**

A committee has been established to help find societies that are willing to host the Annual ADS Dahlia Show. The committee is ready to answer any questions that societies may have about organizing a national show. It is made up of individuals with experience in hosting past national shows. 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.

The following clubs have been approved to host the National Show for the following years.

2025	Central States Dahlia Society
2026	West Michigan Dahlia Society
2027	Rochester Dahlia Society

### **Photography**

Debbie Pavich reports last year, dahlia lovers submitted over 900 photos to both the ADS Photo Contest and People's Choice Photo Contest. The photos and Excel spreadsheet of photographers can be found on the ADS Google Drive. If you need help identifying who took the photo, please send Debbie an email.

The 2024 ADS Photo contest deadline is December 15, 2024. Thank you to Sharon for her help with publicity on the ADS website. Thank you Colin and Linda for your help with publicity in the Bulletin. Debbie will start posting on the ADS Facebook and Instagram page as well. Last year, a mass emailing from Sharon Swaney helped to get the word out. I will try this again in October. Please mention the ADS Photo Contest at your fall meetings. Contest information can be found on ADS website .

## **Publicity/Public Relation**

Larry Smith reports he created a short PSA, designed to invite the public to the 2024 ADS National Show and has asked for it to be shared far and wide. Please post the link on your social media pages, especially those who live in the Pacific Northwest. The show is sure to be spectacular, let's get the word out and pack the Wenatchee Convention Center with awestruck dahlia lovers! <https://youtu.be/EprAlSuKkNM>  
Larry is also working on a short video that will show new exhibitors how to fill out ADS show entry tags.

Larry would like to share an idea borrowed from Deborah Dietz of Dahlia Society of California that has yielded incredible success in attracting new exhibitors. Deborah's club has been hosting a "Novice Show" at a club meeting during the growing season that gives new people hands-on experience at staging blooms for show. This has led to many of their members to start showing their blooms. Portland Dahlia Society has borrowed this idea from Deborah over the past two years. In 2023, several Portland members showed for the first time at the 2023 ADS Show in Portland and followed up by exhibiting in additional shows. This year's Portland Novice Show was held at the August meeting as part of the monthly educational program. At least 50 entries were staged. Some members who have never before entered a show were brave enough to try a triple. The entries were judged, section rosettes awarded to the best single and triple entries, and judges gave feedback to all members present. Some of the new exhibitors have made reservations for 2024 National in Wenatchee. Attracting new exhibitors bodes well for the future of any ADS show. All societies are encouraged to try something similar as a way to attract new interest.

## **Research and Education**

### **Virus**

Ron Miner reports samples are being gathered for evaluation by 19 clubs and 24 vendors across the country. WSU is in the process of testing the samples gathered.

Professor Pappu and Dr. Gnanasekaran recently determined the complete genomic sequences for DMV and DCMV isolates from different states around the US. Sequence analysis will provide a better understanding of the genetic diversity, dynamics of the population structure, and the evolutionary pattern of these viruses. Findings will be presented at the 2023 National Show in Portland.

### **Genome Sequencing**

Kristine Albrecht reports the last year of the American Dahlia Society project has been immensely successful. In particular, we've made progress on all three of Zach's major dissertation chapters:

1. Chapter 1: Building a Resolved Phylogenetic Tree of Species Relationships in Dahlia
2. Chapter 2: The Dahlia Genome and the Evolution of Floral Traits in Dahlia
3. Chapter 3: Identifying the Genes Underlying the Development of Diverse Floral Forms in Dahlia

In Chapter 1, Zach collaborated internationally to collect tissue samples from more than 35 dahlia species with a global distribution over the last 3 years. He has extracted DNA

from almost 200 individuals across those 35 species, generated DNA sequencing libraries, and that data was just sequenced 3 days ago. He will now be spending the next several months analyzing that phylogenetic diversity data, building the dahlia family tree, so to speak, and that will be the first major chapter of his dissertation. This work follows up on the last phylogenetic study in dahlia, which was nearly 20 years ago with two genetic markers, which didn't resolve the tree very well due to limitations with the technology that long ago. Zach's study uses more than 1,000 genetic markers and represents the cutting edge of how to build phylogenetic trees using modern DNA sequencing data.

In Chapter 2, we are excited to announce that Zach has locked the dahlia genome assembly. The assembly is contained in 64 chromosomes as expected, and there are some incredibly complex regions of these chromosomes that were difficult to assemble over the last several years. This represents a major milestone not just in the dahlia community, but in the comparative genomics community across the entire Asteraceae family. The next steps in the dahlia genome project are to annotate this genome, meaning to find and characterize all the genes in the genome. Zach has taken a very fine-scale approach to this question. He isolated, expressed genes (or RNA), from nearly 15 different tissue types from the Edna C plant, and is currently sequencing those over the next few months. This will give us gold standard evidence for where genes are in this genome that we can then use to connect phenotypes to genotypes.

In chapter 3, Zach is identifying genes that control major floral form diversity in dahlia using two complementary approaches.

1. He's taking a plant breeder's perspective by sequencing a large diversity collection of cultivated dahlias collected from the 2021 national show. Nearly 600 individuals are currently being genotyped or sequenced at very low coverage to identify mutations that control traits such as floral form, shape, size, color, and architecture. This project is a very fruitful collaboration between Dr. Harkess's laboratory and Dr. Josh Clevenger's laboratory at HudsonAlpha, who is a molecular plant breeder who supports breeding programs in more than 20 different countries using this next generation of DNA sequencing technology.
2. The second approach is that Zach is taking a developmental biologist's perspective by growing exemplar cultivars that represent the major floral forms in dahlia (7 or 8 of them) and producing a gene expression time course of floral bloom development. By sequencing a gene expression time course of floral development across these different major floral forms, Zach will be able to identify different genes that are turned on and off that perhaps control the development of these diverse forms. This data will be overlapped with the diversity collection sequencing and genome-wide association study from the first part of this chapter. This work is ongoing and required the genome before we could do anything with it.

In summary, we've made quite a bit of progress, especially in the last year of the American Dahlia Society Genome Project. A key aspect of hiring graduate students to work on projects is encouraging them to grow as both scientists and as thinkers. Zach is certainly coming into his own as a graduate student now that he is in his 4th year of PhD.

## **Seedling Bench Evaluation**

Roger Walker reports applications to hold an ADS bench evaluation class in local shows were facilitated by an online form again in 2024. Information about the process was emailed to every local club president and ADS representative. Many responded.

Bench evaluation materials were then mailed to every ADS-affiliated society that completed the online application. Local club officials are reminded to return the transmittal sheet, the scorecards, and entry tags no more than a week after their show.

## **Special Awards**

Jerry reports special awards thanks everyone in the American Dahlia Society for their continual support of the various awards programs. There are generally four different awards presented annually at National Shows. Regardless of the type of award, they all focus on giving recognition to the volunteers and dahlia people that sustain one of the premier specialist plant societies in North America.

### **Wayne Lobaugh**

**The 2024 ADS President's Award** was presented to Wayne Lobaugh, co-chair of the 2024 ADS National Show by ADS President Brad Freeman. The ADS President annually presents this award. The award recognizes a person who has made significant contributions to their local society and beyond. Congratulations to Wayne Lobaugh on receiving the **ADS President's Award** in 2024.

### **Tony DeRooy: In Special Remembrance**

**A second ADS President's Award** was presented in 2024 to Linda DeRooy Holmes-Cook honoring her late father, Tony DeRooy. Tony has long been recognized as a Northwest dahlia pioneer, having contributed immensely to furthering interest in the dahlia and dahlia societies throughout the region.

Special Awards was privileged to present three **ADS Gold Medals** at the 2024 National Show in Wenatchee, WA. The **ADS Gold Medal** is the highest medal award given by the Society.

### **Brad Freeman**

Brad Freeman, currently President of the American Dahlia Society, was recognized for his untiring dedication to the society. Having served three two-year terms and substituting when necessary for the president as first vice-president.

Brad has served the ADS well. Brad is known to have been one of the most innovative and inspiring ADS presidents in modern times. The list of his accomplishments is substantial. The ADS is moving forward in fine fashion due to Brad's leadership. Congratulations to Brad Freeman upon receipt of the **ADS Gold Medal**

### **Don Filand**

Don Filand was a recipient of an **ADS Gold Medal** at the 2024 National Show. Don was recognized for being a person who has worked diligently, mostly behind the scenes, to the benefit of the ADS, its membership and others interested in the dahlia. We consider Don to be one of the unsung heroes of the Society and most deserving of the **ADS Gold Medal**.

## **Dick Parshall**

Dick Parshall received the **ADS Gold Medal** at the 2024 ADS National Show. Dick is a highly knowledgeable and veteran promoter of the dahlia in the Pacific Northwest. He has made significant contributions to the ADS, willingly and effectively serving on several important committees. Dick has also been a dependable supplier of valuable, technical content to the ADS Bulletin. The American Dahlia Society was honored to present the **ADS Gold Medal** to Dick Parshall.

From all in the ADS, we congratulate Brad Freeman, Don Filand and Richard “Dick” Parshall, our 2024 **ADS Gold Medal** recipients.

Special Awards was honored to present two **ADS Silver Medals** at the 2024 National Show. The **Silver Medal** is presented to those persons who have demonstrated a significant presence in the dahlia community. The awardees serve as dahlia ambassadors and are supportive of the societies and the conferences they represent, as well as the American Dahlia Society.

Receiving **ADS Silver Medals** were:

### **Marian Halverson**

Marian is known as the go-to person in the North Central Washington Dahlia Society. On that account, Marian is more than the current society president or simply a cheerleader; she takes on all necessary tasks when required. She has been described as “the glue” that holds things together at the NCWDS. Every successful dahlia society has members like Marian. The ADS is proud to present Marian Halverson with the **ADS Silver Medal**.

### **Sandy and Steve Boley**

Steve and Sandy were awarded the ADS Silver Medal at the 2024 ADS National Show. Their long involvement in dahlias and the dahlia societies in the Pacific Northwest has been unquestionably valuable. Clubs in the region have expressed their deep appreciation for the Boley’s dedication. Sandy and Steve have freely shared, to the betterment of those organizations, their “dahlia expertise.” They absolutely have been ambassadors for the dahlia regionally, nationally, and internationally, and the American Dahlia Society was honored to present Steve and Sandy with the **ADS Silver Medal**.

Four **ADS Commemorative Gold Medals** were presented at the 2024 National Show.

The recipients were local people, and an organization closely affiliated and endorsed by the North Central Washington Dahlia Society. The NCWDS provided valuable insights regarding the immense value these wonderful people have brought to the community and the local dahlia society. The following people were awarded **ADS Commemorative Gold Medals** at the 2024 American Dahlia Society National Show:

**Brad Brisbane, Wenatchee, WA**

**Dr. Peter Rutherford, NCWDS**

**Joann and Mike Walker, Wenatchee, WA**

**The Rocky Reach Discovery Center Staff, Chelan County, WA**

The special awards committee will also be doing medals for the trial garden, seedling bench evaluation, Stanley Johnson, and Les Connell awards.

We are mindful that...*“Dahlias Connect People” (Linda DeRooy Holmes-Cook 2023)*

### **Technology Resource**

Jess Becker reports she has been adding folders to the Google Workspace as requested but hasn't received any requests from the board for help to use the Drive folders.

Brad has currently asked both Elva and Karen to add in their respective work which I'm happy to help with if needed.

She also sent a proposal over to the executive board to move email communications over to our Google Workspace which will make it easier for board members to access their email/drive (vs using a personal email). It would also allow us to set up Google Groups in the future which could replace the Group Vine that we currently have for communication.

### **Trustees**

Harry Risetto reports the financial records of the ADS are in good order. The finances of the ADS have improved and are stable, as a result of increased membership and changes implemented by ADS leadership. The ADS should expand its efforts to attract bequests, grants and outside financial support.

### **Website**

Sharon Swaney reports at the spring planning meeting, **statistics** for the site were requested:

- The site has over 300 pages, 1000s of pictures, and about 170 Photo Galleries.
- In the last month we had 24,000+ page hits and about 350-400 unique sessions a day.
- Most of our traffic is now from a mobile device. Most access is from English speaking countries.
- The most popular feature is clearly the OCG, and we are seeing more member area interaction, and overall usage of Dahlia University.

**We are looking forward to the timely submittal of show season information.**

**Recently:**

- Photo Contest info was added.
- Online voting for Officers was successful.
- Hundreds of improved photos were added to the OCG. Thanks Don.
- Once again, the local show reports will be posted on the website (no more December Supplement). The instructions and call for information were sent out.

**We are always looking for stories and pictures from local society events.**

**As stated last month:**

If you are the Subject Matter Expert for website pages, please review your pages periodically. Please check for errors and consider providing more information and pictures for your pages.

We are always looking for pictures for the site. We need a variety of pictures - garden pictures, club activity/events pictures, bouquet, and arrangement pictures, show pictures and people pictures, etc.

We are also looking for input for Dahlia University. If you have technical information to share, please do so. The webmaster will be happy to help wordsmith and polish the information for publication on the site. We also really love instructional videos.

If you have ideas for information that should be on the site let the webmaster know.

**Questions, comments, information, pictures – [webmaster@dahlia.org](mailto:webmaster@dahlia.org) .**

It was reported that Jess Becker has had to step away from both the cut flower committee and technology resource until at least the end of the year. Wayne Lobaugh has stepped in to chair the cut flower committee.

A new position of communication coordinator was established at the spring planning meeting in June. We would like to fill this position this year. The position would be to facilitate communication with ADS members.

### **ANNUAL BUSINESS**

**Alan Fisher moved, and Ron Miner seconded to endorse the actions of the ADS board. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **Honorarium**

**Alan Fisher moved, and Alli Richards seconded to approve the honorarium for the secretary and treasurer in the amount of \$250.00 each with the amount for the treasurer coming out of the Boeke funds. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Colin Walker moved and Ron Miner seconded for the ADS membership to recognize Brad Freeman for moving the ADS to where it is today. The motion passed unanimously.**

**The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 am PDT.**

Respectively Submitted,

Terry Schroeder  
ADS General Secretary