

**American Dahlia Society
Minutes – Board Meeting
March 28 & 30, 2025**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm CDT by President Mark Oldenkamp. Mark thanked Edith and the New Mexico Dahlia Society for all they have done and have planned for the weekend. Introductions were made around the room.

Present

Board members present were Mark Oldenkamp, Alli Richards, Linda DeRooy Holmes-Cook, Terry Schroeder, Charles Miehm, Brad Freeman, Harry Risetto, Jerry Landerholm, Ron Miner, Dave Smith, Steve Lamb, Brad Freeman, Dan Baulig, Alan Fisher, Mel Epstein, Bob Schroeder, Elva Sellens, Debbie Pavich, Larry Smith, Ron Miner, Heidi Zierdt, and Sharon Swaney. Guests present were Rosemary Freeman, Karen Zierdt, Marian Landerholm, Dianne Reitan, Edith Iwan, Sue, Julie, Sue V, Debbie, Dorothy, Tom, Jim Lohkamp

Remembrances

Mark Oldenkamp asked for a moment of reflection for persons who have recently passed or are having health issues. The following members have recently passed. Roy Stier, member of the now obsolete John Stowell Dahlia Society, Ed Mascoli, member of the National Capital Dahlia Society, and John Quaid, Colorado Dahlia Society. We had a moment of silence to remember all who have passed.

Minutes

Minutes from the November 10, 2024, meeting were sent to board members. **Alli Richards moved, and Brad Freeman seconded to approve as written. The motion carried.**

Executive Committee

The executive committee met on October 20. Those minutes were sent to board members to inform the board about the executive committee discussions. Items will be reviewed at this board meeting.

OFFICERS REPORTS

Treasurer

Charles Miehm presented the treasurer's report for 2024, a budget comparison for 2024 to 2025 and the operating expenses and balance sheet for 2025 through March 21, 2025. Below is the balance sheet, effective March 21, 2025.

Let Charles know if you have any questions.

Harry Risetto moved, and Alan Fisher seconded to approve the treasurer's report subject to review. The motion passed.

Balance Sheet – March 21, 2025

Unrestricted Funds

Ameriprise Investment Account	\$ 5,076.22
Ameriprise Investment Account – Money Market Account	\$ 24,919.29
Vanguard Investment Account	\$ 47,318.59
Wells Fargo Bank - checking - operating	\$ 69,861.29
Total Unrestricted Funds	\$ 147,175.39

Restricted Funds

	\$ 5
Ameriprise Investment Account - Boeke Bequest	9,006.79
Wells Fargo Bank - checking account - Virus Fund	\$ 7,675.84
Wells Fargo Bank - checking account – 2025, 2026, 2027 National Show	\$ 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 – savings account National Show Endowment	\$ 31,939.99
Wells Fargo Bank - savings account - Genome Project	\$ 75,018.74
Total Restricted Funds	\$ 169,941.36
Total ADS Funds	\$ 310,904.03

President

Mark Oldenkamp announced he and Laura now have a grandchild, Ovi Oldenkamp Kamat arrived on March 19. Of course, he had just a few pictures to share. He reported there were four executive committee meetings held this year, with a lot of discussion regarding the genome project. The minutes from those meetings were sent to the board members.

Mark presented the org chart as it looks now. We still have unfilled positions in advertising, new society coordinator and a permanent national show chair. Mark suggested changing the committee chairs to coordinators; it will need to be updated in the bylaws when they are updated. We will get an update on the strategic plan and commit to the next project or two to focus on. The membership task force has been

busy and will have a good report. The trial garden leadership has changed as Marilyn Walton is no longer the chair. Heidi Zierdt has accepted the position of coordinator with her dad, Jerry Zierdt assisting her. Both Heidi and Jerry have been involved with the Minnesota Trial Garden for many years. She would like to review the trial garden procedures and see if there is anything that should be updated. The CHD arrived in March this year; we will discuss how it might be available in February in the future.

There are four new societies which will be approved later this weekend. On Saturday morning, we will have information on the genome project. Dr. Alex Harkess did send in a report for this meeting which will be included under Research/Education.

Our financial reports for 2024 was strong and a 2025 budget proposal is on the agenda. The National Show Endowment fundraising effort had a good start, but we still have a lot to do with this. This will be our first meeting with some new technology assets designed to make the remote experience better for those than cannot attend in person. We would like to find a technology person to help in this area.

Alan Fisher moved, and Bob Schroeder seconded to approve the actions of the executive committee from their meetings on February 5, 2025, January 12, 2025, February 2, 2025, and March 2, 2025. The motion passed.

First Vice President

Linda DeRooy Holmes-Cook reports after assuming the position of ADS first vice president, she has been working with Sharon Swaney and now has an up-to-date GroupVine mailing list for ADS presidents and representatives.

She has contacted these contacts, requesting their information and participation in dahlia.org's efforts to collect and publish dates and locations of upcoming tuber and plant sales. Sharon has been working hard to get this information out to the public in the most expedient manner. We have also notified all local affiliates of the ADS promotion of the 2025 CHD, offering the opportunity to purchase these books at a cost of \$4.00 each plus shipping costs, for use at judging workshops and education. We have had a good response to this offer. She has handled inquiries from ADS reps and officers to clear up a few issues with contact people in local clubs, and we have been able to clarify and correct some information.

Linda is also serving on several ad hoc committees as a member of the ADS executive committee. These are varied, seeking improvement and clarification regarding ADS policy and procedures for now and ideas for the future. These are active and dynamic processes, with ADS board involvement occurring simultaneously as we continue to work to streamline and respond to ADS evolution. We recognize that one of our missions is to expand and improve our reach across the community of dahlia growers in North America and beyond. I am enjoying being a part of this progress.

REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

North Atlantic Conference

Robert Fackovec reports their conference is happy that winter is over and spring is here. They are anxious to get outside and back into our dahlia gardens. New tubers have been ordered and they are looking forward to potting them up. Our conference

tuber sales and show dates should be posted on the ADS website. Stay well and happy spring to all!

Southern States

Lori Goehring reports North Carolina is recovering from the hurricane; they got hit extremely hard. Linda Holmes-Cook states the December *Bulletin* has a call out to people to contribute tubers to the Carolinas.

Mid-Atlantic Conference

Dave Smith reports all chapters in the Mid-Atlantic Conference are doing very well and we are pleased that spring has arrived!

Greater Philadelphia Dahlia Society (GPDS) has grown to over 160 members and is still riding the dahlia popularity wave. On March 8, they held their spring meeting at Longwood Gardens. More than 63 members attended and showed interest in the panel discussion led by Wes Bowers, Tim Elkner, and Dana Miller. We finished the meeting with a tuber division demonstration. Cindy Miller offered the opportunity to order/purchase a wide assortment of apparel with our logo stitched on it. Some members even brought their own items to have embroidered. Dana reminded everyone that the tuber sale will be at Longwood on May 10. GPDS raised the price of tubers to \$7 each.

Gettysburg Dahlia Society (GDS) has grown to 48 members. On March 29, GDS will have a club potting-up party. They plan to pot up as many tubers as they can. They have three greenhouses to grow the pots. On April 12, GDS will meet and have a demonstration on how to irrigate your dahlia patch with drip line and timer. Starting on April 26, GDS will be at the Adams County Farmers Market in Gettysburg for the next 5 Saturdays to sell pots and bagged tubers. On May 3, GDS will be at the Hanover Spring Garden sale followed by the East Berlin Spring sale and the Mechanicsburg Master Gardeners Spring event. We now have 20-20-20 water soluble fertilizer in 1# packages for sale @ \$2.50 ea.

National Capital Dahlia Society (NCDS) had 201 members in 2024. Membership and dues drive is on-going for 2025. The first two meetings of the year, in January and February, were cancelled due to bad weather. March 12, we had the first meeting of the year and presented new certificates and pins for candidate and accredited judges. The ADS new introduction video was shown as the main event. The April 9th meeting will feature our first tuber sale with tubers being offered for \$6 each or 6 for \$30. On May 10, we will have a tuber sale at Brookside Gardens in Weaton, MD (site of our annual fall show). On May 14, NCDS will host its second meeting tuber sale. On May 18, we will plant the Mid Atlantic Trial Garden at Montgomery County Agricultural Farm Park, Derwood, MD. On June 4, NCDS will host our regular meeting and final tuber and plant sale of the season.

The shows for the Mid-Atlantic Conference are: August 17, NCDS Mid-Summer Show and Potluck Lunch, Agricultural History Farm Park, Derwood MD; August 23, Maryland State Fair Dahlia Show, Timonium, MD; September 5 & 6, Gettysburg Dahlia Society Show, Biglerville, PA; September 18 to 22, 58th ADS National Show and Midwest Dahlia Conference, Chicago Botanic Garden, Chicago, IL; September 20 to 21, The Greater Philadelphia Society Show, Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, PA;

September 26 to 28, National Capital Dahlia Society Show, Brookside Gardens, Wheaton MD.

Pacific Southwest Conference

John Morton reports the Pacific Southwest Dahlia Conference is looking forward to a new dahlia season. This started off with a dahlia conference hosted by the Central Coast Dahlia Society. There were about 100 avid dahlia folks attending. The dahlia cutting and tuber sales are ramping up and it appears it should be a profitable year. There have been several informational opportunities that may be available including rotary clubs, garden clubs and garden centers and local fairs asking for us to have an informational booth. Looking forward to the first bloom in the garden!

Pacific Northwest Conference

Steve Lamb reports a lot has been happening during the winter months in the PNDC. Our efforts have been to standardize policies and procedures in all conference shows and activities going forward to make things easier.

In February, we hosted a well-attended spring workshop in Lincoln City, Oregon, both in person and Zoom. Topics included: Finalizing plans for our PNDC Conference show in Victoria, BC this August. We are looking forward to a well-attended, fun show for all of the conference societies. Finalizing the 2025 PNDC combined show book; it was voted to update this annually. A huge thank you goes out to Eric Toedtli for coordinating and producing this publication! Discussions about instituting a PNDC Challenge flower of the year. This added class will highlight introductions of PNDC hybridizers. Starting in the 2026 show season a conference challenge flower will be proposed and voted on two years in advance. The formal submission of the program will be submitted by Eugene Kenyon and Steve Lamb during the year for a final vote and adoption, then included in next years combined show book.

A refreshing judges training session was held in a presentation about dahlia arrangements, also known as design, presented by Bob and Guy Chibante. Their approach is to take the mystery out of the whole class making it easy to understand and easy to judge so that more people will try this for the first time. When their program is complete it will be published and available for all to use. During and following the training sessions a fundraiser raffle was held and made enough money to support the day's activities and pay for a great Mexican banquet for all in the evening.

Plans are ongoing to have Judges Training in the month ahead of the shows. Thanks go out to Elva Sellens, our new judging coordinator for keeping our records straight and advancing well-trained judges to continually improve the quality of our judging results at the shows. Becoming a judge is fun and isn't the mystery many believe it to be by using the tools and modules the ADS provides. Let's all encourage our members to join us in this particularly important task; many hands make light work.

Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers

Alli Richards reports the Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers have been busy and are getting excited about the upcoming growing and showing season. Our hybridizers were once again well represented in the new introductions for 2025.

We just completed our spring workshop and annual Jack Crawford Memorial auction at the end of March at the Bellevue Botanical Gardens. There were presentations of ADS medals for the hybridizers and the judging advancement awards. We had 19 new candidates who received their certificates and pins. Next was an excellent presentation on soil by Doug Collins from WSU. The last session was a panel discussion on how different clubs deal with their dahlia sales. Items discussed were from getting donations to crowd control. It was a great panel with many different ideas shared with the group. Last we had the auction. A fun time was had by all, and we had some serious bidding wars. We managed to raise \$2455 for the FNWDG this year.

Upcoming we have the Dahlia Legacy Project's Once in a Decade Fundraising Tuber Sale. This will be an online sale April 28 at 9am. If you want early access to the preview list join the newsletter at www.legacy.nwdahlia.org. In June we will have our summer workshop, and Alli is anticipating what the education committee decides for the programs. At the end of July, we have the judging workshops to get ready for the start of show season the first weekend in August.

We wish you and yours a plentiful dahlia season with many fond memories of your dahlia friends.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ADS Store

Dan Baulig reports the following:

CALENDAR YEAR SALES ADS STORE:

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

Color Guides - **16**, 2023 CHD - **2**, 2023 CHD Large 3-hole - **0**, 2024 CHD - **29**, 2024 Large 3 Hole CHD - **14**, 76-2022 Spiral Composite - **7**, 76-2022 3-hole Composite - **3**, Guide to Judging Dahlias - **29**, 2nd 50 Years - **3**, Show Tag Rings - **1**.

October 2022 Bulletin - **0**, January 2023 Bulletin - **0**, June 2023 Bulletin - **0**, December 2023 Bulletin - **0**, April 2024 Bulletin - **0**, August 2024 Bulletin - **0**, December 2024 Bulletin - **30**

Total CALENDAR Year Shipments from the ADS Store: 136 through March 19, 2025

FISCAL YEAR SALES (June 1, 2024, to March 19, 2025) ADS Store:

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

Color Guides - **66**, 2023 CHD - **9**, 2023 CHD Large 3-hole - **4**, 2024 CHD - **133**, 2024 Large 3 Hole CHD - **39**, 76-2022 Spiral Composite - **34**, 76-2022 3-hole Composite - **9**, Guide to Judging Dahlias - **114**, 2nd 50 Years - **5**, Show Tag Rings - **5**.

October 2022 Bulletin - **0**, January 2023 Bulletin - **2**, June 2023 Bulletin - **20**, December 2023 Bulletin - **4**, April 2024 Bulletin - **14**, August 2024 Bulletin - **0**, December 2024 Bulletin - **33**

Total FISCAL Shipments from the ADS Store: 489 June 2024 through March 19, 2025

Classification

Mark Oldenkamp reports the CHD was just recently mailed out. There seems to be a strong interest in societies purchasing extra copies of the CHD for their new ADS members. There is a concern that publications are slow to get to the east coast. The issue is with USPS not with the ADS. Perhaps we can look at a different way of distributing publications. Mark said he would speak with Karen about data errors and her desires for online show reporting.

The goal is to have the CHD completed and mailed by the first week in March. Karen told Mark she is able to have the data completed earlier. However, Colin is not able to have it compiled and to the printer earlier than March. If we want it done earlier than March, we would need to find someone else to compile it. Sharon would like to have the full composite so she can get that put on the website. The Mod Squad wants to have the CHD information digitally so they can update the CHD module.

There is a society that uses tablets/iPads to record the show results as they judge the show. They would like to have the full CHD database so they could do that easier. There might be the possibility of them sharing their program with ADS as well. If we provide the full CHD database, we would want to have a contract in writing with them.

Brad Freeman moved, and Sharon Swaney seconded that the online classification guide is updated by January 20 annually. The motion passed.

Editor

Pat Looney reports the April ***Bulletin*** was completed on time. Society reports are the major focus of the ***Bulletin of The American Dahlia Society***. It is exciting to learn what each society is accomplishing. Some of the topics include funding scholarships, inspiring community gardens, education of tuber planting, growth, pest control, improving soil conditions, creating community - read all about it! My thanks to the ADS Representatives for submitting great reports.

The 2025 American Dahlia Society & Midwest Dahlia Conference 58th National Show is to be held in Chicago.

There are several other features in the April 2025 issue including the ***ADS Virus Update*** by Ron Miner, ***2025 Judging Program*** by Bob Schroeder, ***Cut Flowers*** by Wayne Lobaugh, ***Dahlias Forever*** by Sherree Kneller-USPS Stamp collection of Denise Ippolito and ***Petal Power*** by Larry Smith & Dr. Sherman, OHSU.

Pictures, pictures, and more pictures via the ***2024 ADS Photo Contest*** results included in this issue. Debbie Pavich, Chair, ADS Photo Contest has captured, in living color, the art in each photo. It is amazing.

It was an amazing experience to edit my first Bulletin. Colin is incredibly talented. Thanks to Sharon and Linda for answering my many questions.

Finance

Harry Risetto provides the following information about the ADS finances

- The ADS Finances are stable and will support scheduled, ongoing activities. Revenue for 2024 exceeded expectations.
- The ADS should consider exploring the feasibility of continuing its genome research through a formal or informal agreement with a company engaged in the propagation and sale of dahlia cultivars. The availability of a wide-range dahlia cultivars at the ADS's annual national show is a valuable resource
- The ADS should consider supporting limited research projects that would provide direct value to its members.
- The fund to support ADS national shows has long-term value and should continue.
- Initiatives should be adopted to increase advertising revenue.
- A program should be enhanced to encourage gifts to the ADS from the estates of ADS members

Garden Dahlias

Alan Fisher reports at the planning meeting last year, we discussed several ways to deal with “garden dahlias” going forward. The primary problem is that no one has been able to develop a definition of a garden dahlia. A few definitions were put forward, but none looked likely to generate a consensus.

When we opened for discussion, the consensus of the board members was that we should focus on education and outreach. Our goal should be to attract gardeners who do not yet grow dahlias and help them understand why we believe that dahlias are so terrific. Ala proposes that we rename this committee to: Outreach and Education.

Once we make this change official, Alan would like two or three more members of ADS to join and to take over various parts of the new orientation.

1. There is plenty of educational material already on the ADS website. He would like one person to work on organizing the education and outreach material. In some cases, there is instructional material from some years ago where the author is no longer a member of ADS. In such cases, we can move this material to our section (while keeping the author's information unchanged). In other cases, we should contact the author and ask whether he or she would like the material moved to this section – or to keep the material in its current location and add a link in our section to show where relevant material is elsewhere on the ADS website. Once we have a coherent map that shows where to find educational material for relatively new dahlia growers, we can move on to filling in missing information. First VP Linda Holmes-Cook is doing a presentation on growing dahlias in the desert. This topic is particularly important. (It would include some material on how the procedure and suggestions depend on some factors – such as SW deserts compared to deserts in the NW where summer is neither as extreme nor as long). Also, how would one cope with occasional summer downpours such as during monsoon season near the four corners – something that may not be an issue in all desert area. In short, the educational materials should include variations with special challenging growing conditions.

2. There seems to be interest in the topic of growing dahlias in containers, especially for those who live in apartments or townhouses that have limited growing space. It would be good to have a person take over this topic. Alan would be glad to share some of his limited knowledge on the subject.

3. It would be useful to ask local societies to question potential but reluctant dahlia growers and learn why they shy away from dahlias. Do they look for criteria different from those of ADS judges? Is there a way to attract these growers and see if they want to join us at some point in time?

4. One proposal from last year was to make a list of dahlias that are easy to grow. However, what is easy for some people to grow is especially challenging for others. Should we encourage hybridizers to develop seedlings that produce as many blooms as possible? That goal gains up to 10 points in our new seedling scorecard, yet some may not be interested in growing and taking care of dahlias that produce large numbers of blooms. Many want dahlia plants that can be groomed in a few minutes, not plants that take 30 minutes or longer to groom. Are there some aspects in our judging standards that may cause problems for some of our members? If so, we should identify them and consider whether to modify in any way.

5. This puts forward a few ideas of how a new co-coordinator of this committee can make progress in terms of education and outreach. Hopefully some more ADS members will have some ideas and join what Alan hopes to be a larger committee. Over time, within a few years, it will be time for someone else to take over this committee. Alan would like to work with a few colleagues to become active, share ideas, and make progress in this area. When we have someone ready to take over leadership of the committee, he would like to have a good start to turn over to the next person.

Image Library

Heather Ramsay reports the “Best Of 2024” slideshow and video have been released into the wild and is available through the ADS website.

The Image Library is looking forward to partnering with Heidi Zierdt as the new trial garden chair, as well as continuing communication with Colin Walker in order to improve the timeline for collection of images and release of future productions.

A huge thank you to the more than twenty-six photographers who contributed photos last year! The request for submissions in last year’s *Bulletins* was helpful in enabling us to make contact with new volunteers.

Insurance

Mel Epstein reports the insurance year has begun uneventfully despite the current crisis in property insurance rates. The spike in rates is a result of inflation increasing repair and rebuilding costs combined with major natural disasters in several parts of the US. Fortunately, ADS was offered an automatic renewal of its Club General Liability Policy with only a modest increase in premium. Societies will not see any change in subscription cost brackets this year.

March 15, 2025, was the renewal date for club policies and societies have been signing on at a brisk rate with 35 societies renewing by the March deadline. The online subscription module on the website has proven increasingly popular with the only glitch

being a few officers who did not have access to the ADS members only portion of the website and needed help finding the new password for the members section of the website.

Judging Accreditation

Bob Schroeder reports in 2022, the president of the American Dahlia Society instructed the ADS judges accreditation coordinator to form a committee responsible for revising the judging tests for three levels of judges: candidate, accredited, and senior. The tests for candidates and accredited judges have already been completed and are available to members in the members' section of the ADS website under the judging and show category. The test for senior judges has recently been finalized and will also be accessible on the ADS website. All tests are designed to be taken online, providing immediate results, with a passing score set at 85%. The decision to use these tests to meet advancement requirements will be made by the individual society's/conference judging chairs. The judges' training modules have proven to be highly effective in introducing members to the ADS judging program and refreshing the knowledge of accredited and senior judges.

Membership

Elva Sellens reports it has been a busy month for memberships coming in, but less than half of the 2024 memberships have renewed so far. She is receiving monthly membership lists from some societies as the dues trickle in. With the weather warming up and tuber sales coming up, membership renewals should increase. She sent emails to membership chairs that have not sent in any memberships that it was time to renew. There has been a trend where the societies are no longer collecting ADS dues and sending them in. Some societies have an online payment system for members to pay their various dues. Since the societies were paying a fee in processing the ADS payments, they did not want to absorb the cost of the fees, so they quit collecting ADS dues and are having members pay their dues directly to ADS. We are now receiving a lot of online renewals.

U.S. Memberships

We currently have 1,191 memberships – 916 individual memberships and 275 household members (x2= 550) for a total of 1,466 members. We have 283 new 2025 memberships so far – 240 individual members and 43 household memberships (x 2= 96) for a total of 326 new members.

There is some good news; St. Louis Dahlia Society has rejuvenated their society and has requested to rejoin ADS as a participating society. Welcome back, St. Louis. Glad to see your club now has a passionate group of dahlia lovers. We have a new group, Sierra Nevada Dahlia Society, who wants to become an affiliated society. They have started a dahlia society this year. We never had a society from Nevada, so it is exciting to have a new society there.

Canada Memberships

Only 5 of 9 Canadian dahlia societies have sent in their memberships. For 2025, we have 70 memberships – 55 individual members and 15 household memberships (x 2= 30) for a total of 85 members. We have 9 new individual members and one household

membership for 11 new members. Of the 70 memberships, 38 of them are digital memberships.

Overseas Membership

We have 7 overseas memberships for 2025. We have a new 2025 member from Brazil this year. In April, Elva will be sending out renewal reminders to the 2024 members who have not yet renewed.

National Exhibition

Bob Schroeder reports the hosting clubs for the upcoming national shows are listed below. The years marked as "pending" indicate there are clubs that have expressed interest in volunteering but have not yet made a firm commitment. Please remember that reserving dates for hosting the national show are allocated on a "first come, first served" basis.

2025 Central States Dahlia Society Sept. 18-22, 2025

2026 West Michigan Dahlia Society Aug. 28-30, 2026

2027 Rochester Dahlia Society Sept. 16-19, 2027

2028 Pending

2029 Southwest Idaho Dahlia Society (Needs approval)

2030 Pending

2031 Open

2031 Open

2032 Open

2033 Open

2034 Pending

Photography

Debbie Pavich reports the results from both the ADS photo contest and the people's choice contest have been released. A huge thank you to Sharon for all her help and support. Thank you, Pat Looney, for saving space in the upcoming Bulletin and for giving her some extra time. She will be migrating all photos to the shared drive.

Dahlia season will be here soon. Enjoy the beauty of our favorite flower.

Publicity/Public Relations

Larry Smith reports he was asked by new *Bulletin* editor Pat Looney to write an article about some exciting research about medicinal properties within dahlias, look for it in the April *Bulletin*. Pat has also asked him to write an article for the August *Bulletin* related to the upcoming national show in Chicago.

Larry has offered to help with 2025 National Show publicity and to create promotional videos but has not yet received direction from the organizing committee. He has also been planning to create a video of the 2025 ADS Photo Contest entries, pending receipt of the photo files.

Anyone who is in need of consultation for promotions they want to do for club shows, sales, or other activities, please contact Larry well in advance of the event. Do keep in mind that during the growing season, his time is much more limited, so don't delay.

Research and Education

Virus Project

Ron Miner reported the bulk of the testing and field analysis work in 2024 was based on an effort to minimize the presence of the DMV virus in selected dahlia gardens. That emphasis grew out of the highly disappointing results in 2023 that showed the broad presence of DMV in the samples tested. The three basic rules of maintaining a clean garden (If in doubt, throw it out; clean between, and start with clean stock) proved to be effective in the other key viruses (TSV, TSWV, INSV); but the incidences of DMV were extremely high.

Fortunately, several of the participants in the 2023 vendor testing opportunity had succeeded in avoiding DMV entirely. Their procedures depended on the same three basic rules cited above but added rigorous testing and tracking of the parentage of their cuttings. Plants with viruses were rigorously excluded from the process. One key to their success was starting with clean stock! Another element in one of the vendor's success was starting with seeds, as seedlings tend to be clean at the outset.

With clean stock provided by two of the vendors, the author planted a small, isolated clean garden that stayed clean throughout the season. In another larger garden, 34 seedlings were mixed throughout a garden with a mixture of clean DMV-infected plants. Each of the 34 seedlings remained clean at the end of the year. Enough clean stock was gathered at the end of the year to provide for planting the larger garden with all clean stock in 2025. I will follow the clean stock strategy to determine if it is sufficient to keep the plants clean in the larger garden.

Professor Pappu and the team at WSU are actively working to develop a supply of clean dahlia stock. Plants from that stock will be field tested by the Virus Team in 2025.

The pipeline for generating virus-free plants from the infected mother plants by meristem culture is established. WSU meristem culture pipeline includes two steps, first to establish cultivars into tissue culture propagation and then proceed for meristem culturing from those plants. This involves excising meristem under stereo microscope, initiation of meristem culture on plant growth media, virus testing, and maintaining the clean stocks in tissue culture media. Shoots from clean stocks are transferred to culture tubes with plant growth media. Currently, there are 15 show cultivars in the pipeline.

On a separate note, a thesis project at Utah State University examined the effects of soil nitrogen level on the production of marketable cut flower dahlia stems. In the last year of the three-year study, virus-free plants were included in the project. The yield of stems from the clean stock was significantly higher than that for the untested plants in the previous years at the same nitrogen level. This result underscores the value and the importance of clean stock.

Genome Sequencing

Kristine Albrecht shared the following report from Dr. Alex Harkess. Zach is close to finishing his 4th year of PhD, and he is (in my eyes) doing very well in terms of progress. 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 in late 2024. He is currently analyzing these data, building the Dahlia family tree, and that will be the first major chapter of his dissertation. He has completed a draft coalescent multi-gene species tree of these 35 species, each with ~1,200 genes sequenced per individual plant. This is the largest generation of Dahlia data ever and a major push forward in the phylogeny of Dahlia.

In Chapter 2, Zach has locked the Dahlia genome assembly as of a few months ago in late 2024. 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. Zach successfully sequenced RNA (expressed genes) from 15 different tissue types from the Edna C plant, generating hundreds of millions of expressed sequence reads. He has generated a gene annotation that is high quality and matches closely to the *D. pinnata* genome assembly and annotation. In other words, Zach's genome assembly and annotation is now locked and extremely high quality. We are ready to publish this, and Zach is quickly writing the genome release manuscript that we are intending to submit to a journal "G3".

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 Dahlia collected from the 2021 national show. Zach has recently generated whole genome resequencing data for 384 individuals to identify mutations that control traits such as floral form, shape, size, color, and architecture. This project is a very fruitful collaboration between my 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. Zach is currently analyzing this data in an association mapping approach to identify mutations in the genome that correlate with these floral traits. This was a major milestone in Zach's PhD.

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, this project in the last 4 years has built the largest collection of Dahlia genetic and genomic data on Earth. We have built the family tree for the entire genus, we have generated a particularly challenging genome assembly for a tetraploid dahlia, and we have sequenced hundreds of dahlia cultivars to identify genes controlling major traits. I am in awe of Zach's progress and thank the ADS for their contribution to us

Seedling Bench Evaluation

1. Roger Walker reports all bench evaluation paperwork has been updated for 2025 and posted on the ADS website.
2. Each ADS club rep as well as each club president will receive information about holding a bench evaluation at their 2025 show. That email will contain a link to an online form that needs to be completed. Only one of the recipients needs to complete the form. It is sent to both the ADS rep and the club president in the hope that at least one of them will read their email and complete the simple online form.
3. Ribbons and paperwork will be sent to each club that completes the online form.

Special Awards

Jerry Landerholm reports This is traditionally a less demanding time of the year for Special Awards though it is still a time for planning with an eye on recognizing individuals who have dedicated themselves to the betterment of the American Dahlia Society.

The 2024 Seedling Bench Evaluation and Trial Garden medals have been sent to ADS officers who have agreed to personalize the presentations. Thanks again for your help. Unfortunately, there was a mix up of the Les Connell and Stanley Johnson Silver Medals, but this has been corrected. (The congratulatory letters were correct; it was the medals that were inadvertently mixed up.)

Special Awards has received suggestions for new awards. These are being reviewed with special consideration on the importance of balancing recognition and fairness.

The American Dahlia Society awarded the ADS Silver Medal to David Spencer of the United Kingdom. The presentation was to occur on March 23, 2025. Dear friend of the ADS and Patron of the National Dahlia Society, David Brown was scheduled to make the presentation. Dave Spencer is known worldwide for his broad knowledge of dahlia culture. Many of us first became aware of Dave from his contributions, over the years, to the *Dahlias of Today*. Dave continues as a "dahlia influencer" maintaining a presence on newer forms of media including YouTube. Congratulations are extended to our latest ADS Silver Medal recipient and well-known ambassador for the dahlia, David Spencer.

Keep Chicago in mind and register soon for the 2025 American Dahlia Society's National and Midwest Dahlia Conference's Annual Show hosted by Central States Dahlia Society.

Trial Garden

Heidi Zierdt reported she would like to receive information from Marilyn Walton, the outgoing trial garden coordinator, and a job description. Terry said she will reach out to Marilyn. Heidi understands there has been some difficulties in getting information from trial garden directors in a timely manner. She would like to determine ways to make it easier for them to get information to her.

Website Coordinator

Sharon Swaney reports this is a busy time of year in website land. Most end of 2024 season info has been added to the site since November. The following is what she has been doing:

- Added Online Local Shows Report - poor participation this year, a little over half of the societies participated.
- Added Photo Contests (and voting for the People's Choice). Lots of great pictures. Thanks Debbie and the participants! Congratulations to the winners.
- Made available New Intro presentations. Thanks Heather; nice job.
- Added Trial Garden information and awards to blooms info.
- Made available Fab 50 and Cream of the Crop.
- Tweaked insurance information for 2025.
- Moved the online payment capability for non-store payments to a new product (previous product is slated for obsolescence), migration was somewhat successful, but we (NinjaForms, Charles and Sharon) are still working out some issues. But we can get money!
- Made some changes to the store.
- Made some changes to local society information, it's always a struggle to get the most recent info.
- She is in the process of posting local spring sales information.
- Made many changes to the contact page.

She is planning a new feature. We have a Trial Garden location page, but it really isn't about the locations, it is about where to send your tubers. I will be asking for information about the physical location of the trial gardens and the policies for visiting so if someone is in, say Tacoma, and wants to visit, where and how they can do that.

She hopes to have new classification information soon to add to the Online Classification Guide.

The meeting was temporarily adjourned at 8:59 pm MDT until Sunday at 8:30 am.

On Sunday, the board meeting was resumed at 8:30 am

Charles Miehm provided an update on our fundraising efforts from yesterday. At this point, we have \$1857.00. We will reimburse our treasury for the \$750 provided to the NMDS and the surplus will be split between the ADS and the NMDS.

Brand Identity

Dianne Reitan volunteered to coordinate a committee to look at rebranding for the ADS. Alli Richards will look at the talent survey results to contact people who indicated a willingness to help in this area and see if they can find a few people to work on this committee. If there is anyone in the room or online who would be interested in helping, please let Dianne or Alli know.

Judging Accreditation Review Board

Saturday afternoon, it was decided to organize a judging accreditation review board to help with issues that cannot be resolved between the judging accreditation chair and the local chair. Bob Schroeder will work with Alli Richards on this review board. Bob stated he already has one member willing to serve on this board.

Bylaws

On Saturday, it was brought up that we should change the title of committee chairs to coordinators. Brad Freeman stated this would require a change in our bylaws. He feels that the ADS should consider reviewing the bylaws; they are piecemeal and the language is not always consistent. He believes we should consider hiring an attorney from New York to help us rewrite them, since the ADS is incorporated in the state of New York. He stated the Puget Sound Dahlia Society hired an attorney to help them rewrite their bylaws and found it to be helpful. Mark reports he will start using the term coordinator instead of chair with the understanding that the bylaws update will include this update.

Coalition of American Plant Societies (CAP)

Harry Risetto stated there is a group named CAP that was developed several years ago by several plant societies. There are currently over 50 plant societies that are on the mailing list and invited to attend. The subjects of the meetings involve technology, membership, publications, shows and other subjects people are interested in. The organization has no structure, no leadership and functions well as is. The ADS is one of the few societies that reports an increase in membership. Most likely one of the reasons we are having an increase in membership is due to the ADS embracing local societies who encourage membership in the ADS.

American Horticultural Society

Harry Risetto stated the American Horticultural Society (AHS) puts out a magazine, *The American Gardener*. They are willing to exchange advertising in their magazine for advertising in other plant society magazines. Harry would like to propose that the ADS participates in this reciprocal advertising program with the AHS.

Society Grants

Robert Facovek, Regional Vice President for the North Atlantic Conference, has submitted a proposal for local societies to submit requests for small grants from the

ADS. Many societies within the ADS are small and do not have the resources as some of the larger societies. He feels a grant program would assist the local societies and show them support from the ADS. The grant program could help with things such as garden maintenance, renewal, upkeep, dahlia education, membership, etc. The grants would be considered by a grant committee who would convey their recommendations to the ADS board. The grant application outline would go to all ADS member societies. Each interested society would have a grant chairperson who would be responsible for the filing and reporting about the grant. An organization that is awarded a grant must submit receipts to the ADS board. Robert suggests that there would be one award annually to each conference and one non-conference society. A society may not request a second grant until each society within the conference or all non-conference societies have either received or declined to apply for a grant. There was a concern that \$5,000 per year, the maximum that could be awarded in a year, could become problematic. A budget for 2025 was approved with a line item of \$2,000 for the grant program. It was felt that the larger, more established societies may not feel the need to request a grant but there are societies that could use this type of grant, especially the new societies. It is felt that it is important for the ADS to support those societies that are just getting started. It is felt this should be for a one—time need and not take the place of a society putting on a tuber sale. Perhaps we could do a more targeted idea for grants with tightened up criteria. It was felt the focus needs to be refined a bit. Robert Fackovek, Steve Lamb, Debbie Pavich, and Lori Goehring agreed to be on the committee for this grant program and were asked to come back with a refined proposal at our next meeting keeping trial gardens, new societies and society display gardens as important areas for grants.

National Show

Bob Schroeder reports he received a letter from the Southwest Idaho Dahlia Society to put on the 2029 National Show and Charles Miehm has received the required deposit.

Terry Schroeder moved and Alli Richards seconded to accept the Southwest Idaho Dahlia Society for the hosts of the 2029 national show. The motion passed. There are also societies that have expressed interest in shows for 2028, 2030 and 2034

New Societies Coordinator

Although we do not currently have a new society coordinator, two new societies have requested to be in the ADS. Sierra Nevada Dahlia Society in Nevada has requested to become a participating society in the ADS. **Mel Epstein moved and Alan Fisher seconded to approve the Sierra Nevada Dahlia Society as a participating society. The motion passed.** The St. Louis Dahlia Society in Missouri has requested to be accepted as an affiliated society in the ADS. St. Louis Dahlia Society went dormant a few years ago and are now reforming and working on meeting the requirements for a participating society. **Alan Fisher moved and Harry Rissetto seconded to approve the St. Louis Dahlia Society as an affiliated society with the understanding that if they meet the ADS membership threshold for participating status in this membership year, the affiliated society dues would be refunded. The motion passed.**

Boeke Award Criterion

There has been some discussion about the Boeke Award and that the criterion we have been using is not totally in line with what is in the information that has been provided by Gene Boeke. However, it is felt that the primary purpose of the award is to continue to have Boeke originations grown and exhibited in shows. If we follow the criterion set up as it is, it is likely that there will not be anyone receiving a Boeke award again. Brad Freeman suggested we do something a little different that would still honor Gene Boeke and the gift he gave to the ADS. He proposes that there be a competition for the best Gene Boeke introduction at every National Show. The competition would be open to all with a prize of \$500.00. There would be a spot in the Court of Honor or on the Head Table for the best Gene Boeke introduction. **Linda Holmes-Cook moved and Bob Schroeder seconded to create a special class for Boeke originations with a \$1,000 award for 2026 and forward. The motion passed unanimously.** The 2025 national show already has criteria set for their show so we didn't want to make this change for this year but starting in 2026 and moving forward. We need to update the national show book and possibly the policy manual.

Job Descriptions for All Committee Chairs/Coordinators

Mark Oldenkamp requested all committee chairs/coordinators develop job descriptions for their committees and place them in the Google Workspace drive. There is a folder for job descriptions in the shared google drive, under American Dahlia Society.

Garden Dahlias

Alan Fisher believes that garden dahlias focus more on education, especially information on how to grow dahlias. He would like someone to go through the website and determine areas where there is this information and either put it under Garden Dahlias under the Grow tab, on the Gardening with Dahlias tab or provide a link to the information. The other focus is outreach to encourage garden lovers to grow dahlias. Many dahlia growers are not interested in exhibiting but grow dahlias for their beauty. Alan would also like to have someone who is familiar with growing dahlias in containers. Dianne Reitan agreed to work with Alan on the garden dahlia committee. Alan would also like to change the name of the committee to Education and Outreach. This will be discussed at the time we do the next update to the bylaws. Mark Oldenkamp suggested that Alan write a letter for Sharon to send out to the ADS membership asking if there are any members interested in working with him on the garden dahlias committee.

Access to New Introductions

There has been concern that it is now getting difficult for ADS members to be able to purchase new introductions. Is there a way to make them available to new members? One suggestion was to reach out to hybridizers for donations that would be made available for ADS members only in an online sale.

Online Membership Payment Fees

When making membership payments online, there is a transaction fee. Some societies are choosing not to accept ADS fees or will only send the net amount, i.e., the cost minus fees. There was also discussion about adding an extra 5% (or other amount) to cover the ADS fees for those who are joining as at-large members. It was asked that if a society is deducting the fees from what they send to the treasurer that they let Charles

know they are doing so. At this time, no action was taken as it may be that this issue may be resolved with the new membership process.

ADS Vases

Steve Kuiper is now the person handling the orders for the vases. Communication seems to have been an issue in the last couple of seasons. Dan Baulig, store manager, will work with Steve to see if they can improve the process. They will also consider the possibility of having inventory and sale of vases run through the store.

Staging Materials

Mark Oldenkamp stated that there doesn't appear to be any issues with staging materials at this time.

Communication with Regional Vice-Presidents

Linda Holmes-Cook stated it is important to have formalized communication with the Reps. It is important to let the local reps and presidents know they are an important part of the ADS.

The next board meeting will be on July 20, 2025, following an executive committee meeting on June 22, 2025.

Next year's spring planning will be in the south, either in North Carolina or Atlanta.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 am MDT.

Respectively Submitted,

Terry Schroeder, ADS Secretary