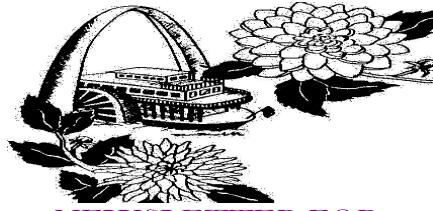


DAHLIA DIGGINGS



NEWSLETTER FOR:

"THE GREATER ST. LOUIS DAHLIA SOCIETY"

Volume #4/07 E-Mail edition

PRESIDENT, Colleen Simons (636) 583-8568; **VICE-PRESIDENT**, Mike Plannett (314) 846-6650;
SECRETARY, Bob Sewell (618) 234-0176; **TREASURER**, Jim Davis (573) 484-3731;
FINANCIAL SECRETARY, Shirley Pollinger (636) 584-8311
HEALTH and WELFARE CHAIRPERSON: Judy Sewell

Plant Sale

May 12th and 13th at the Garden

MEETING:

April 20th

The Society meets the third Friday of each month at the
Missouri Botanical Garden at 7:30 pm.



REFRESHMENTS:



Shirley Pollinger, Jim Davis, and Maleta Fox



EDUCATION:

Mike Plannett has invited Ken Quandt to give a program on the beneficial use of natural or organic fertilizers.

This is the perfect follow-up program to the comprehensive February program on soil.

Combined, these programs should provide an excellent foundation with planting a mere three weeks away.

MALETA FOX has taken over the chairmanship of the refreshment calendar. She reports that volunteers are still needed for May, June and July.

ANY FUTURE health and welfare items should be referred to Judy Sewell, the society's new chairperson.

THE SOCIETY offers condolences to Sarah and Brian Meyer following the recent passing of Sarah's father, Roy Talbert, in Kansas City.

THE REVISED society roster will be available via the May bulletin and/or at the plant sale.

WELCOME: The society welcomes new members: **Zachary Catanzaro** of Granite City; **Dwaine and Judith Summers** of Maryland Heights, Mo.; and **Keith and Debra Markarin** of Decatur, IL.

BOARD MEETING: Two topics, Section "V" of the show schedule and membership, highlighted the agenda of the annual board meeting held prior to the regular monthly meeting, March 16. Vice President Mike Plannett chaired the board meeting.

- The Board has recommended to the membership that SECTION "V" (Bouquet of Dahlias) be part of the 2007 show schedule, but with revisions to the rules that governed the 2006 competition. The recommended revisions are as follows:

RECOMMENDED REVISIONS SECTION -V

*The word **Guidelines** will be substituted for **Rules and Conditions**.*

1. **No change.** *Each participant will be allowed three (3) entries.*
 2. **Recommended language:** *The vase and/or container should not detract from the bouquet and disposable-type containers are strongly discouraged.*
 3. **Recommended language:** *Balance should influence the number of blooms in an entry, rather than a specified minimum and maximum number.*
 4. **Recommended language:** *Any living plant material can be used to enhance the appearance of the entry.*
 5. **Recommended language:** *An entry must be 360 degrees in appearance.*
 6. **Recommended language:** *A scoring system will be devised to assist the judging team to better define artistry and quality of blooms. The judging team for this section will be composed of members who have an eye for a bouquet of flowers.*
- The consensus of opinion was that the question of membership goes well beyond just attracting new members. Not only are new members needed to re-grow the society but the new members must be much more than roster names. New members should be given a welcome packet containing numerous growing tips and it was also suggested that new members be given several plants to grow and that a current member pay one or more visits during the growing season to offer some hands-on help and encouragement. Some related that prospects tend to shy away when told that the St. Louis climate is such that dahlias must be dug and stored during the winter for replanting in the spring. People want to grow low maintenance things, instead, one said. So the question is, "How do we as members break down this barrier"? And the answer was, "There is no simple solution. And all, we as members, can do is plead our case and be honest".

PLANT SALE: Expect Plant Sale Co-chairman Joe Davinroy to clarify any last-minute questions regarding our annual plant sale. The plant sale is the society's primary fund raiser. Also expect Joe to push again for a goal of \$3,000.

LOOKING AHEAD: Donna and Hank Soltermann report that the annual August picnic meeting will be held on the 18th at the Tremayne Lakeside Shelter at Creve Coeur Park. And in that regard, Jerry Donley has told the bulletin editor that there will be plenty of fried fish again. Donley and wife, Judy, have recently returned from their annual extended fishing trip to Mississippi. Jerry would only say, "There will be plenty of fish."

AN ADDENDUM: To help with one's overall spring gardening chores, Colleen Simons is providing some helpful do's and don'ts in dealing with the early April cold snap and subsequent unseasonable weather.

Dear Members,

In the aftermath of the recent record-breaking cold spell, gardeners must be patient with their damaged plants, especially our trees and shrubs. The freeze puts a damper on what had turned out to be all early, but beautiful spring.

At this time it appears the worst injury is limited to open flowers, new buds, and new foliage. Spent flowers will be shed and most of the damaged leaves will continue to deteriorate in the days ahead, eventually drying up and falling off. Expect the appearance of your garden to decline aesthetically for a period of weeks before fresh, new growth returns. It may take until mid-summer before your garden looks normal again.

Perennials with damaged leaves and stems can be cut back to the ground and will respond with rapid new growth. However, resist the temptation to prune frosted trees and shrubs. Healthy well-established plants will produce new growth. How quickly this occurs will depend on individual species, location in the landscape, and the severity of the damage sustained.

Resist the temptation to fertilize heavily. With the loss of flower buds, all of the trees energy will be channeled into vigorous vegetative regrowth. Fertilizer could actually produce excesses of growth that will have to be pruned at a later date, creating higher maintenance in the long term.

Water cautiously. Avoid soggy conditions which can do more harm than good, but do irrigate during long dry spells. Reducing water stress may be the single best thing you can do to help your plants recover this summer.

Overall, consider this untimely freeze only a temporary setback. Given time and patience, our gardens will recover. Since every dark cloud always has a silver lining, on the plus side we probably won't have to worry about raking up any Sweet gum balls this autumn.

WHITE ELEPHANT: Rummage around and find something unusual for the white elephant drawing. Don't forget the society's two \$5 gifts. Finally bring an appetite for delicious treats and interesting dahlia discussion.

A "THANK YOU" FROM BRIAN AND SARAH:

We would like to thank everyone for the support and kind words after the passing of Sarah's father, Roy Talbert. He was a wonderful person with a zest for life that made everyone he came in contact with smile. He will be dearly missed and we have not gone a day since he passed with out something reminding us of him. And, as I came to this part of the newsletter, I am once again reminded of him. One of his favorite things was to tell a good joke, you see he was a traveling salesman in the dairy industry and this was a great ice breaker for him. He always had a joke for me, some of which I had heard several times, but they still made me smile. So, as a tribute to a great father, mentor, and friend I would like to dedicate this month's installment of "Henry's Joke of the Month" to him. One of his other passions was golf, so with apologies, here's an "R" rated golf joke.

Here's this month's installment of

HENRY'S JOKE OF THE MONTH



DON'T MESS WITH MOTHER NATURE

Towards the end of his golf round, Dave hit his ball into the woods and found it in a patch of pretty yellow buttercups.

Trying to get his ball back in play, he ended up thrashing just about every buttercup in the patch.

All of a sudden ... POOF!!

In a flash and puff of smoke, a little old woman appeared.

She said, 'I'm Mother Nature! Do you know how long it took me to make those buttercups? Just for doing what you have done, you won't have any butter for your popcorn for the rest of your life.

Better still, you won't have any butter for your toast for the rest of your life.
As a matter of fact, you'll never have any butter for anything the rest of your life!!!!

Then POOF... She was gone!

After Dave recovered from the shock, he hollered for his friend, 'Fred, where are you?'

Fred yells back, 'I'm over here in the pussy willows.'

Dave shouts back, '**DON'T SWING, FRED; FOR THE LOVE OF GOD, DON'T SWING!**'

"See ya later kid, write if you find work"

Comments and Questions greeted with a smile.

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