

Dear Rhode Island Dahlia Society members,

December 10, 2007



Some news from 2007:

**Rental Fees:** The Town of North Kingstown decided to charge an hourly fee for the use of the Community Center. In the past the Society donated a set amount once a year for all the RIDS events held in the Community Center. The membership felt that keeping the show at the same location was important in spite of the increase in expense. Members voted a \$2 increase in the annual dues. The Society has reserved all meeting and show dates for the coming year. A fall garden tour was proposed as a future fundraising event.

**Auction:** In 2007 RIDS had a single auction in mid-May. The logic for the change to the later date was that members would know better what tubers they could spare for the auction, that a single auction would be less work for the Society, and that the weather would be better for planting. Nicholas Sterling, our esteemed auctioneer kept the bidding lively. The sale brought in more income in a single auction than in any year with two auctions. The Society thanks everyone, members and non-members who brought in plants or tubers for the sale. Joan and Larry Additon, Walter Gross and Walter Taylor brought in plants from cuttings. Gayle Wentworth needs to be mentioned specifically. The large number of tubers she brought in allowed the Society to make a bulk sale before the auction even began.

**Dahlia Shows:**

In spite of the early heat and dry weather the Washington County Fair Dahlia Show drew many competitors and blooms. As always the summer crowd oohed, aahed, wanted to know what those beautiful flowers were, and how to grow them. The 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual RI Dahlia Society Show had a record number of entries and was well attended. Bouquets were sold. Thanks to Joan Additon, Deb Puerini, Gail Wentworth, and many of the competitors who shared their blooms for the benefit of the Society. The ladies sold all the blooms in about an hour earning enough to pay for the hall rental expenses.

**The Website:**

[www.RhodeIslandDahliaSociety.org](http://www.RhodeIslandDahliaSociety.org) is still in the works. If you type it in the banner says it is coming soon. I will have Marty send a note on the postcard/email notice when it is up.

**Judges Class:**

While all of our blooms are beautiful to us, what criteria do the judges use to evaluate a bloom? What makes one flower better than another? There are a number of ways to find out.

Learn all about it in the Judges Class. Joyce Sterling, a senior judge, is the instructor for the RIDS Judges Class. Or learn by listening; volunteer to clerk at a show. Clerks record the judge's determination of winning blooms. Or learn by reading; buy the ADS booklet "Guide to Judging Dahlias". It is packed full with detailed information about every aspect of an exhibited bloom.

NOTE: Certified Judges may take the course as a refresher for the 5 year re-certification exam.

**Changes for 2008**

The Society relies on strong volunteers. We thank the Additons, Larry and Joan for their years of sharing their spring harvest of rooted dahlias at the auctions. The Additons have decided to leave the cuttings and potting on to others in 2008. The Society wishes them well and will see them at meetings in the coming year. For years now Walter Taylor has come in early before the monthly meetings and set up the chairs and tables. While we all know that Walter is not one to complain, now parts of his body are complaining to him. The Society is looking for volunteers for specific months to come in early and set up. To help, call Joan Additon 401-294-4734. Thank you to those who have already volunteered.

## IN MEMORIAM WILLIAM "Pop" DYKSTRA

William "Pop" Dykstra died on Pentacost Sunday. He sang in the Church choir in the morning, went home, and lay down to take a nap. He was 91. Bill or "Pop" as he was better known was a Christian gentleman in the classic sense of the word. He was the last surviving founder of the Rhode Island Dahlia Society. He served the society as a past president as well as Chaplin.

Mr. Dykstra had three passions in his life: his God, his family, and his dahlias. A member of the Methodist Church since 1931; in retirement he helped to build the current church structure. He was a member of the choir for 74 years, and knew most of the hymns and the Bible by memory. He was a Sunday school teacher and long time member of the Board of Trustees. Always proud of his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, a number of his dahlias were named for them.

By profession "Pop" was a commercial fisherman, who loved gardening. He maintained a large garden of flowers and vegetables. Surplus veggies went to Church on Sunday to be shared with all those who wanted them.

One of Pop's passions was developing new dahlia varieties. He developed 12 ADS approved varieties in different categories. His varieties include: Austins Bo, Christiana Alexis, Alexis D, Austins Pride, Austins Beauty, Bills Pleasure, Dykstras Delight, Janet D, Janets Mum, Katrina Lee P.H.D., Pink Beauty. His first introduction was in 1979 and his last one was in 2001.

Many of these varieties are still actively grown and exhibited. At the Middleton, RI "Green Animals Topiary Garden" there is a special section devoted to dahlias. It is co-sponsored by the Green Animals and RI Dahlia Society and includes several dahlias developed by Mr. Dykstra.

As an avid dahlia grower, he encouraged many individuals to grow dahlias. There are many in Rhode Island who grow and enjoy dahlias because of the efforts of Pop Dkystra. He had endless patience describing the waterlily, cactus, lacinated, formal, and other dahlia features to novice growers. This was always done with a quick and ready smile. Pop was a long time exhibitor of dahlias throughout the Northeast with many placing in the "Court of Honor" in shows.

For the last 35 years of his life, his thin and frail physical appearance deceived people. He would work at a steady pace and outlast individuals 25-30 years his junior. Landscaping the Church, he led the way in planting and mulching, climbing in to the back of his truck to fork out the material. Building the new Church, he carried 2 by 4's, sawed, hammered, put in ceilings, and painted like any 35 year old construction worker. Everyone who knew Bill "Pop" Dykstra benefited from his example of how life should be lived.

From the Bulletin of the American Dahlia Society Summer 2007 written by Walter Taylor

### **E-mail:**

Marty requests that all members make a choice of either email or post card notification. If you have not been receiving e-mail notification about the meetings and you want to receive electronic notification, then please email Marty at [metz10@cox.net](mailto:metz10@cox.net) He must receive notice directly from you. This currently is the only way that you can get on the email listing.

**Remember:** Pay yours dues before December 31, 2007. Do not miss notification of RIDS events or ADS Bulletins or Classification books. I look forward to seeing you in the coming year.

Sincerely,

Abbie Barber, membership