

# THE MUM CHRONICLE

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD DOMINION CHRYSANTHEMUM SOCIETY

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ODCS website: [www.odcsmums.club](http://www.odcsmums.club)

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## Events Box:

**Save the date - Please join us Saturday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021 for the Zoom Meeting at 2:00 pm, with special speaker Dan Schadler on “Fertilizers for Fabulous Mums”.** Featured in this newsletter is information on 2021 supply order, horticulture notes and potting event.

## PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Dear ODCS members,

We like to thank all our members for your patience and understanding with the many date changes for the plant order! With everyone's assistance and attention given to the changes, we were able to place our order on January 13<sup>th</sup>. Just moments after placing our order, King's Mums on-line order was shut down. That is just one of the benefits of being a ODCS member, we were able to have a filled date saved for us. Mums, the word has gotten out! The demand for exhibition mums has greatly increased as more people are gardening while staying at home.

We had a total of 518 King's mums ordered, with 141 for our two plant sales at Green Spring Gardens and the Ayr Hill Plant Sale Vienna Freeman's Store. St. Tropez, an Intermediate Incurve, was the most popular cultivar! Once again, thank you for your order! It helps with our expense that the organization incurs, such as meeting room rental, Zoom subscription, and the annual banquet etc.

At present time, all our King's orders are filled. The orders will be delivered during the week of May 3, 2020. As the shipping date gets closer, Rosemary will keep you posted of your individual King's order delivery.

We are still working on the Garden, Pot and Belgium Mums order.

The special speaker for our February 13<sup>th</sup> Zoom Meeting is Dan Schadler, the President of the National Chrysanthemum Society (NCS). Dan has been a member of NCS for 40

years, with much experience as a chrysanthemum grower. Dan will share with us his knowledge on the types of fertilizer and their applications. Please note that the Zoom Meeting date is on **Saturday, 2 p.m., NOT on Sunday**. Invitation to the Zoom Meeting will be emailed to members on the morning of the 13<sup>th</sup>.

## **2021 MEMBERSHIP**

ODCS has a total of thirty-three members. This includes four NCS Lifetime Members, Galen Goss, Robert Howell, Carmen Keister and Warren Pfeiffer, and two Honorary Members, past presidents Jeanne Malone and Todd Brethauer.

It is never too late to join ODCS for \$30 or renew your membership. A one-time renewal for 2021 is only \$10 for members who were active in 2020. ODCS is picking up the \$20 dues for the National Chrysanthemum Society. Please send in your dues to Lisa Romano, the Membership Chair with the Membership Form, make check payable to **ODCS**. The Renewal Form and new Membership Form are attached in the Newsletter email.

We mourn the passing of our member Dr. Ann Brown, who passed away on January 4th, 2021. She was an ODCS member for 31 years.

We would also like to thank Bobbie Lively-Diebold for her recent donation to ODCS.

## **SAVE THE DATES FOR POTTING ACTIVITIES**

Many hands will be needed to help with the potting. Please mark your calendar to help on Thursday and Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup> and May 7<sup>th</sup>. This will be at Tim Moore's backyard, 9338 Athens Road, Fairfax, VA 22032. We will ensure safety measures are in place for working under Covid-19, such as mandating mask wearing, and safe spacing between one another. Plants and supplies will be available for curb-side pick-up in the afternoon of May 7<sup>th</sup> by scheduled appointment. You can pick up your plants on the day of potting if you are volunteering on the potting task. Please RSVP to [OldDominion@mums.org](mailto:OldDominion@mums.org) with the Potting Sign-up Form attached to the newsletter email.

## **SUPPLY SALE**

The Supply Order form will be sent out at the beginning of March. The supply will be available for pick-up the same time you pick-up your plants. Dick Waldschmidt, our Supply Order chairperson, will be assisted by Gary Holliday for this task this year. Thank you both for volunteering.

## HORTICULTURE NOTES

By Galen Goss

**What do I plant my mums in – soil that is.** You have a couple of choices depending on where you are planting.

1. **If in the ground** – then you can just plant in the natural soil – Virginia clay – or you can supplement the natural soil with some additives. The danger of just planting in Virginia clay is that you will probably not have adequate drainage which your mums need. The clay will create its own in-ground clay pots holding the water and potentially drowning the mum plant's roots. You can avoid this danger by amending the natural soil with a number of additives. Normandie Atkins developed a simple recipe a number of years ago.

For a bed of approximately 100 square feet, mix and till in:

- 5 lbs. 5-10-5 fertilizer
- 5 lbs. superphosphate
- 5 lbs. dolomitic limestone
- 1 bale peat moss
- 3 bags composted cow manure or rotten leaf mold (3 bushels). I cheat on this one and use topsoil. You may have to judge whether your bed needs or can hold the whole bale of peat moss and 3 bags of additional material. I do not always use the whole amounts.

Let the bed rest for a week or so before planting. Before planting, rake the bed to a smooth surface. This is an easy recipe to follow and it works.

You can consider a raised bed for your mums. This gives you the opportunity to add better soil with the Virginia clay. I have a slightly raised bed for my garden mums – framed and leveled – so somewhat raised. Each year as I turn the soil (by hand as opposed to a tilling machine) I remove some old soil with clumps of clay. This gives me the space in the bed for the additives from Normandie's recipe. After many years, I can put a shovel into the bed to at least the top of the blade. It is good, loose, dark soil.

The other step you should take when planting in the ground is to test the soil pH. Mums like a slightly acidic soil – about 6.5. You can obtain soil test kits at a number of locations – local library, garden centers, and Master Gardener's tables at local farmer's market. The test kits are sent to VA Tech. The kits are free, the test has a

modest fee. The results will tell you if you need to increase or decrease the acidity of your soil to the optimal level.

2. **If in pots** – you can either mix your own soil or use a pre-mixed soil like Pro-Mix that we will have on the Supply Order next month. We will also have several sized pots on the Supply Order. I have used both and I must tell you that I find it a whole lot easier and quicker to use the Pro-Mix. When I mixed my own, I would combine topsoil, peat moss, and perlite. I was buying 3 items and then spending time mixing them in a tub – 1 bag of topsoil, an approximate equal amount of peat moss, and then enough perlite that would help with drainage. Then I would add water. Now, I just put the Pro-Mix in the tub and add water – enough that the soil sticks together when picked up and squeezed.

There are more extensive discussions about soil for your mums in both the *Beginner's Handbook* and the *Advanced Grower's Handbook*.

Either in the ground or in pots, you need to fertilize your mums throughout the growing season. Our February Zoom speaker will talk about fertilizers. We will have a variety of fertilizers available on our supply order next month.

## IMPORTANT DATES

Please save the dates for upcoming chapter Zoom meetings and activities:

- March 14<sup>th</sup>, Rita Rover on “Cascades”
- April 11<sup>th</sup>, Ivor Mace on “Growing Large Exhibition Blooms”
- May 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>, ODCS Potting Activities
- October 30<sup>th</sup>, ODCS Mums Show



## **GROWER'S HANDBOOKS**

Everything you want to know about mums but afraid to ask? Galen Goss has copies of the *Beginner's Handbook* (\$10), the *Advanced Handbook* (\$10) and *Mums the Word* book by Pat Stockett Johnston (\$15) for sale. These are very handy informational books, valuable for new and experienced growers. Please contact Galen at [gossg@verizon.net](mailto:gossg@verizon.net).

## **EDITOR'S MUSING**

My goal is to grow a cascade this year. I have grown two in the past, one I gave to a former member who entered it in her Garden Show and it was awarded a Blue Ribbon. The buds were not open for the Mum show, but were open two weeks later for their show. The second I gave to a former member who sent me pictures of it on her deck. It was beautiful. This year is going to be interesting in many way.