

ART AND JULIE CHMURA

2018 Inductees

Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers Hall of Fame

All successful dahlia clubs are led by a cadre of volunteers that take care of the tasks that keep the organizations alive and vibrant. Since 1992 Art and Julie Chmura have been an integral part of the Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers and the Puget Sound Dahlia Association and have contributed much to the organizations over the years.

Born in Spokane, Washington, Art left the Inland Empire to attend Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. After graduation in 1968 he first worked for General Motors in Buffalo, New York. Art then moved to Seattle in 1974 and went to work for Boeing where he filled several finance positions until his recent retirement. Julie was born in Seattle, Washington and attended Cleveland High School. She also worked at Boeing between 1984 and 2000.

Art and Julie met on St. Patrick's Day in 1983. The two were *finally* married in 1999 – an event that many in their families had hoped would have happened perhaps a bit sooner.

The pair have been active in Federation activities for years. Art has served as member at large on the Federation board for an eternity. They were both extremely active in the 2004 National Show sponsored by the Federation: Art acting as show chair and Julie designed the well-known logo. Art has taught the Federation's accredited-to-senior judging class (also for an eternity), presented at workshops, and is a regular speaker at local garden clubs, extolling the virtues of the dahlia. Julie is better known for her activities on the arrangements front but was also instrumental in the Federation's fling with dried dahlias. That endeavor proved more popular with the public than with hard-core dahlia exhibitors. Art has often presented "Dahlias 101" classes for the public at both Federation-sponsored National shows and at PSDA shows. These classes are popular with the public, promote the Federation and local clubs, and naturally lead to new members.

Art and Julie started raising dahlias in the mid 1980s after receiving some dahlia tubers from Julie's neighbor. The first year was not very successful but some of tubers survived the winter and came back the following spring. Art and Julie attended a couple of PSDA dahlia shows in the late 1980s including one at the Scottish Rite Temple in Seattle. In 1992 they met Ted and Lois Hastings at the Northwest Flower and Garden Show and were quickly signed up to become PSDA members.

Art has served as PSDA Trustee, Vice-President, and President. While most people serve in these roles once, Art served in each role twice. Art is currently the Chair of PSDA's annual dahlia show and has been responsible for the Challenge Flower competition since 1996. Together Art and Julie are the editors of PSDA's monthly online newsletter and prepare the annual membership directory.

If there is a Federation or PSDA volunteer event you will generally find Art involved in some way. It may be the spring planting or fall clean-up at the Volunteer Park demonstration garden. Or you will find him inspecting tubers at one of PSDA's tuber packing "parties" prior to the spring sales. Or you can find him instructing new dahlia growers on the proper methods of digging and dividing tubers or judging exhibition dahlias. Art and Julie are both long-time Federation senior judges and faithfully judge at many Federation shows each year.

Health issues have slowed Julie over the past few years, but during the 1990s and early 2000s she was as active as Art. You would find her at every club meeting or volunteer event with Art, cheerfully smiling and helping. Julie really enjoys preparing for and entering arrangements in the various dahlia shows in the region. Elsie Dungan was Julie's mentor, and over time they become very close friends.

Besides dahlias, Art and Julie are very involved with the Kidney Cancer Association; Julie is a kidney cancer survivor. The two of them host between four to six support group meetings each year at the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance and attend many national meetings of the association.

Having been bitten hard by the dahlia bug Art and Julie are exactly the type of folks every dahlia organization needs to survive. Art and Julie both enjoy their many roles with the Federation and PSDA. And now Art has taken to hybridizing and introducing dahlias under the Glencoe name. Hats off to Art and Julie Chmura – a pair of super volunteers who are helping to keep the Federation and PSDA vibrant organizations.