



NEXT MEETING: May 10 at 6:30 at 9th and Lincoln. Program: The hour earlier is because Deborah and Pat will bring the last cuttings from the greenhouse. Some of these are the really special things that took so long to germinate. Deborah will bring her late greenhouse goodies, too. If you have some to share, bring them along. So, we've got ourselves a Second Chance Sale! Plus our Program: Deborah will present the annual Year of Dahlias slide show. Invite your neighbors, family, friends and dahlia fans. Who will bring tasty goodies to share with the crowd we hope to have?

CUTTINGS 101

Deborah distinguished between tuber cuttings—straight from off the tuber when the sprout has at least



two sets of leaves—and tip cuttings, the top three sets of leaves from a growing plant. She mentioned that leaf cuttings are possible if you get meristem—growing cells—included, but they are harder to root so she usually avoids making them. Devi admitted that she used to be mystified by the term “pot root.” Then she learned that it means dahlia cuttings grown in a pot, often merely a 4x4” pot whose tubers when mature are confined to that small area. The advantage of a pot root is that you can grow an entire mini root clump in such a small space and use it for making cuttings in the following year. Can you get tubers from one of this year's cuttings? Yes, Devi, explained IF you plant your cutting with at least the first two nodes under the surface. So if you bought a small cutting, you have

two choices: One, let it grow taller before planting or Two: plant it in a hole so that the first two nodes would be covered by dirt, but do not fill your hole in until the cutting has grown well beyond the surface of the ground. [The April 2015 DSC newsletter has lots of pix about taking cuttings.](#)

HARDWARE CLOTH PROPHYAXIS

Tinnee came all prepared to demonstrate her elegant gopher cages but our rowdy group went on to buy more dahlias. You can read about her cage design in the May 2013 issue of our DSC newsletter. Major congratulations to Baker Bill for winning the conference medal for Best AA at our show last year with his stunning Nick Sr. Heavy. Frank asked our group to give him suggestions for topics or speakers for our meeting programs. He asked us all to keep our eyes peeled for interesting topics or people to impart their knowledge. ([Check out the May 2015 article about Tinnee's gopher cages.](#))

INSIDER'S SALE

Devi and Deborah brought in a bevy of beauties. Devi's BIG ONES included KA's Cloud, Zorro, and Belle of the Ball. In milk cartons you could find, Shea's Rainbow, AC Abby, Bloomquist Jeff, Lakeview Glow, Mexico and even a Sandia War Bonnet. Soc donated tubers of Trooper Dan. All the way from Kenwood, Cathy schlepped in “shopping carts” for us—cardboard flats to transport our treasures. Joe practiced using Sarah's gift to DSC: a cell phone credit card reader. We're in the 21st Century now.

GENEROSITY OF FRIENDS

Thanks to Marilyn for startling our palates with hot peppers. John and Annette donated coconut bites. Leo brought m&m cookies. Pat gifted us with both HopNop cookies and organic lemonade. Bill and Dan's rice Krispy treats disappeared so fast, likewise the big box of See's Candies. MMMMM. Thanks to Ron and Joann for again sharing a huge box of their organic Meyer lemons. And what a moist and luscious carrot cake our Baker Bill baked. Our migrating DJ and Paige gave away several ceramic pots and a tall avocado plant. What nice parting gifts.

TUBER SALE PUBLICITY

Lola discovered how to get our Tuber sale on Marin public access TV. Well done. PJ Bremier wrote her entire gardening column in the Marin IJ about dahlias, extensively quoting Deborah and highlighting our sale. Cole Hardware not only donated wine and water to our sale, but also published our Tube Sale poster in its 8-page flyer that goes out to most SF homes. Devi posted our poster on NextDoor. Thanks to the many people who put our poster up on FaceBook. Our with-it Colleen snapped us into social media like snapchat and Instagram.

SATISFYING THE BUYING HOARDS - MORE WITH LESS

Instead of their usual 1400 cuttings, Lou, Pat, and Devi carted in half that amount. Soc and Tony helped truck them from the greenhouse to the auditorium. John Dale set up tables on Friday afternoon. Deborah Elemented in close to 300 in milk cartons. Debby helped integrate milk cartons and cuttings. Sue, John, Annette, Lola, Jamie, and the Greenhouse Gang brought in lovely tubers—again fewer than last year, but quite sought after roots. Marilyn donated a handful of much needed Sharpies. Shelly and Carl labeled tubers; Tom and Chad put them in their designated spots. Colleen and Martha whetted the crowd's appetites



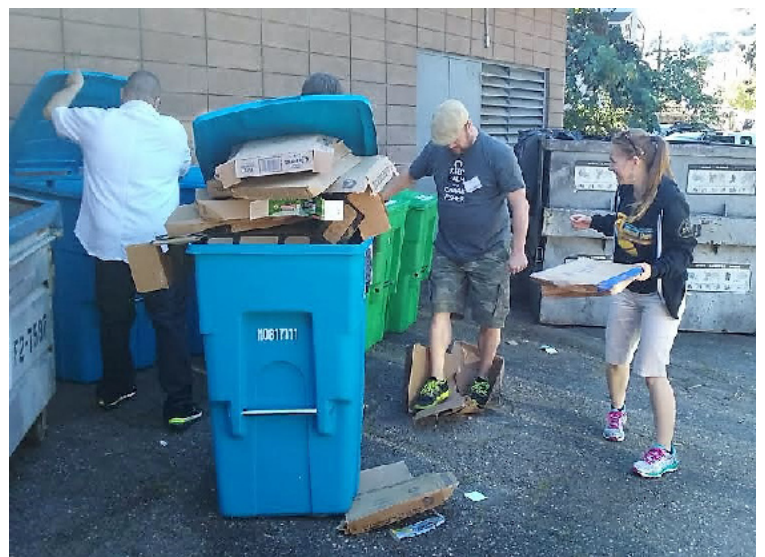
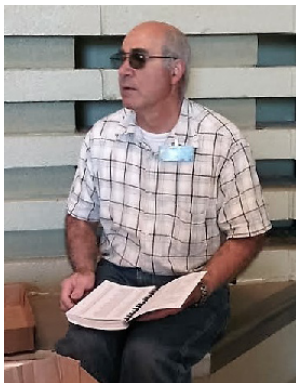
and answered questions whilst the rest of us volunteers shopped and shopped. Devi's beautiful photos enticed many clients. Gerda brought in a huge poster "We're Dahlias, Too" touting open-faced blooms. Frank, Marcia, and Tinnee helped shoppers through to the very end. Thanks to Sue and Cathy for tallying Frank's check-out slips. Joe rang up hefty credit card sales and Dan raked in cash and checks. Acting as both security and email takers, John and Billy thanked our buyers and

encouraged them to come back next year. Devi reported several new DSC members; Treasurer, Joe, reported that we threw our best sale in several years. Thanks to all of you who contributed dahlias, roots, help, wonderful attitudes and expertise.

Without ALL OF YOU we have no society!







DELICIOUSLY REWARDED

After dismantling tables, Tom and Chad brought out their yummy mac/cheese crock pot to join Dan's sloppy joe crock pot. Cathy tossed her fresh salad. Lola cooked her cute chicken nibbles which complimented DJ's potato salad.

Deborah's ham casserole had everyone guessing about her secret ingredient, "clove mole." Joe brined us pickles. Pat proffered pizza. Both Billy and Devi baked us death-by-chocolate cakes. John and Annette sustained us with a huge box of pastries. Thanks to Colleen, Frank and Cole Hardware we had wine and water as options with Lou's sodas. We toasted our success: Great beginnings of our new season.



THWARTING A CANNY CRAINE

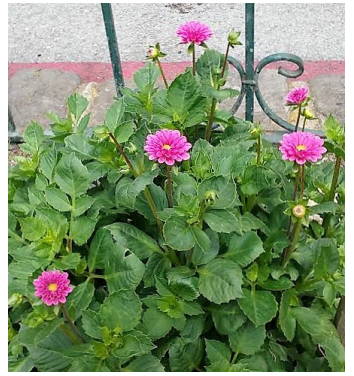
John Mani from SoCal sent in this wonderful story about solving a pest-y problem.

One day, in mid-March, after I planted all of my tubers, a large white crane came visiting. According to a witness he stopped at my plots and began digging with his long beak. He unearthed about 8 - 10 tubers and knocked some tubers out of the planters into the aisles. I was called & came to the scene. The crane had been scared off and I replanted the tubers as they appeared unharmed. This crane repeated his "trick" twice more, always without injuring the tubers, just displacing them. Finally, I cut up some black weed retardant plastic, which has micropores to admit light and water but stops weeds from growing. I cut this material up into 20 inch squares, slit one side of the square to fit around my stakes, and weighed the "squares" with small stones. Of course, being black, this intensified the sun and heat, a mini hot house, and my tubers sprouted "early". This stopped the crane and he has not reappeared. However by April one, I have 10 tubers sprouting, after only 14 days of lying under the black plastic. What a "jump start" for my garden. The crane helped me out. I have left the "squares" in place, search under them every 7 days or so, and remove the square when the tuber sprout is showing. Each year I learn something new. That crane was a wise old bird! I am saving the squares and stones and will repeat this procedure every year to get early blooms.

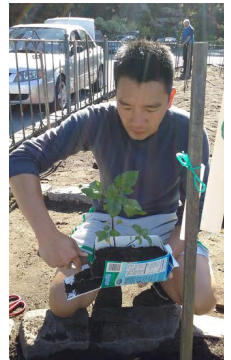


DAHIA DELL DENIZENS

There's a whole lot of planting going on at the Dell and even a few dahlias blooming. Tinnee has a gay collarette; In Deborah's section Elviras dance in the raindrops and Wildwood Marie is gorgeous. Sue added mesh helmet to her gopher baskets, just to keep her treasures safe until they grow a little bigger. Erik invited Nick's Boy Scout pal to help with weeds. John, Billy and Sarah planted several new exciting cultivars for Deborah and troweled out canals so water gets to each plant. Sue generously helped weed Pat's section before planting. Come out to visit, help or learn on a Saturday morning.



Elvira



DAHLIAS BLOOM ON CANVAS

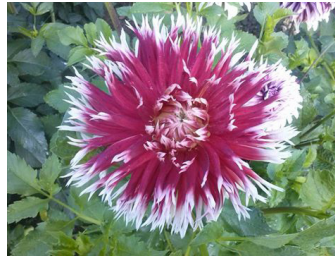
The prestigious Joyce Gordon Gallery mounts a one-artist show of Kevin Woodson's watercolors including many of dahlias from our Dell. Kevin invites all DCSers to his opening: Friday, June 3 from 6-9 PM. Come hear his "artist's talk" Friday July 8, from 6-9 PM. The Joyce Gordon Gallery is located at 406 14th Street in Oakland. Go support one of our own. Rumor has it Kevin will also be teaching a water color class. Check his website for details. Kevin@kevinwoodson.com



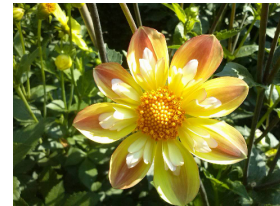
This month's eye-candy



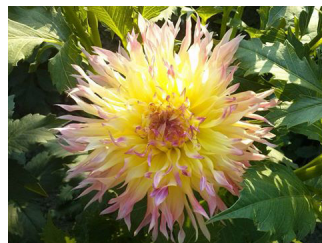
**Grandma's
Lemon Pie**



Sandia War Bonnet



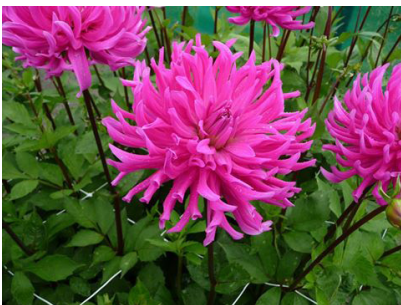
Ntac Eileen



Hapel Perfeckt



Easter Bonnett



Jayne Addict



Sandia Suncatcher

MERRY MAY MUSTS

Keep planting! I have planted as late as June, but now is exactly right. I have about 177 in the Dell, growing like weeds. I gave them their first cocktail which included: Serenade, Spinosad –also called Captain Jack’s Dead Bug—Stylet Oil, kelp extract (with trace elements from the hydroponics store), and a couple tablespoons of dish-washing soap---all in VERY DILUTE solution. This just gives them a little extra protection and boost to get established more quickly and safely. YOU MUST put some snail/slug/earwig protection around new plants. They can be mown down by voracious little chewers overnight without some kind of defense. Paula likes metal copper rings. “They’re expensive, but you can use them for years.” The slime of the slugs reacts to the copper ions and causes marvelous discomfort to the slow devourers. I use Sluggo Plus. Sue has discovered a new Safer product for crawling and chewing insects. Cole Hardware now carries the Safer brand garden products.



Are all your dahlias LABELED? Put in your stake and label it BEFORE you plant. In gopher country you MUST use cages. All the dahlias on the Hillside in Golden Gate Park use Tinniee’s elegantly designed metal dahlia baskets. Phil will tell you that gophers seem to know exactly which dahlias you paid the most for and plunder them first. Be safe not sorry. Elvira had 5 jaunty blooms on April 21, a record for early. I’ve already pinched out over a dozen dahlias in April—unreal how early this year’s dahlias are. I wait for the first glimmerings of a bud. Then I pinch below the trio of main bud and two side buds and below the two leaves that accompany the trio. This forces all the energy that would have gone into the first flowers, down into establishing better roots and firm stalk. Thus the second flush will be stronger. How many sprouts should you let grow? Militant Lou allows only one stalk and his winners throng to head tables around the Bay, attesting to his wise discipline. I sometimes let a few stalks flourish on the poms, ms, an, min and singles. They’re supposed to be small, after all. Judicious discipline yields glorious results all summer long.

Now is the time to put the first level of horizontal Hortanova screening about 18” off the ground. Put it the entire length of your bed. This allows the new growth to grow tall and get supported without stakes. Add another layer at 36” and even a third layer at 50” if needed. This is an option instead of staking every single plant. Other growers draw a twine corral around each bed and plant more closely together, allowing the plants to support each other. Kevin and Karen at Corralitos employ this method. Discover what works best for you.



Yours in Dirt,

Deborah

[Click here for past issues of the DSC newsletter](#)

Dahlia Society of California, Inc., San Francisco, CA -- Copyrighted

Like what you see? Visit the DSC for even more dahlia information. And if you are not a DSC member yet be sure to join.
sfdahlias.org

Originally Organized
In 1917
In San Francisco

the Dahlia was adopted as the
Official Flower of San Francisco
on October 4, 1926
by its Board of Supervisors

Editor: Deborah Dietz
Page layout: Mike Willmarth
Snail mail: Pat Hunter
Photo credits: Byers, Dietz, Hart, Schulkin, Woodson