



**NEXT MEETING:** July 8 at 7:30 PM at 9th and Lincoln. Andrew Sutherland of UC's Integrated Pest Management program will talk us through various levels of pest containment and eradication from the most mild to utterly maleficent. Again Deborah will give hands-on lessons about disbudding and deadheading and clearing off lower growth at the Dahlia Dell at 6 PM. Who will bring delicious treats to share with fellow DCSers?

### BEYOND NPK

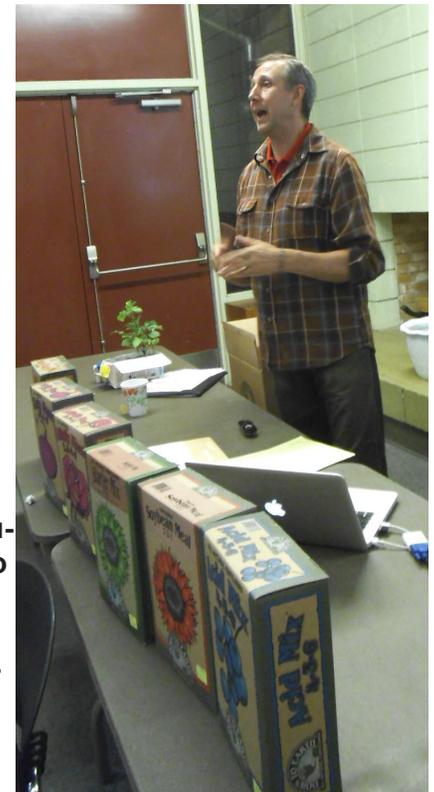
David Perkins, the soil specialist from Lyngso, declared, "The way to get a plant to reach its full potential" is to "cultivate a full spectrum of biological activity." To this goal, David reviewed the primary macro nutrients: N nitrogen, P phosphorus, and K Potassium:

- 1- Nitrogen energizes growth and promotes leaves
- 2- Phosphorus encourages flower and seed formation
- 3 - Potassium inculcates resistance to stress and disease.

The secondary macro nutrients include:

- 1- Calcium for early growth and strong stems
- 2 - Magnesium for chlorophyll formation
- 3 - Sulfur to stimulate oils and proteins.

Then David cited 16 trace elements which include boron, chlorine, cobalt, copper, iron, and molybdenum of which we need only very minute amounts. "The limits to plant growth are determined by the scarcest nutrient available." How do we achieve this happy balance of macro/micro and trace elements? David showed us 6 different specialty fertilizers including a completely vegetable based blend, an acidic mixture, and a combination with more trace elements.



One of the best ways to accomplish this balance at home is to have a diversification of compost materials, not just egg shells and coffee grounds, but also shrimp tails, crushed crab carapaces, fish skeletons, dinner scraps, and leaves and grass clippings. The secret is the diversification. David suggests we add micro rhizomes as we plant our dahlias. If we want to add them after we've planted, we should get water soluble microrhysomes and make channels to help them get below the surface of the ground. Microrhysomes help bring far flung nutrients to our dahlias and help one dahlia plant communicate with another about insects and things. Fungi, bacteria, nematodes, and protozoa help keep our soil healthy. David also stressed the importance of air in our soil; all these micro helpers need space to wriggle about to thrive.

David invited us to check out the Lyngso's website for their many seminars: [lyngsogarden.com](http://lyngsogarden.com). He concluded with an observation Leonardo da Vinci made 500 hundred years ago but which is still so painfully true, "We know more about the movement of celestial bodies than about the soil underfoot."

## GENEROSITY OF FRIENDS

What a welter of wonderful dahlias we had for sale. All the way from Windsor, our newest members, Pam and Larry, brought Kelvin Floodlight, and two other plants to share. What a way to start out! Tony's Hollyhill Icarus was immediately snapped up. Devi donated fabulous Mingus Nicole, Inland Dynasty, Creve Coeur, Bea Paradise and Elsie Houston among others. In her tell-tale milk cartons, Deborah brought Hollyhill Shaggy Dog, Inflammation, Vista Minnie, Karma Choc, Hot Lava and Starring to tantalize people with last minute holes in their plots. Warren brought his famous Lemon Zing, Verrone's Sandra J and several baskets for flower arrangers.



The delicious strawberry short-cake came from Gino. mmmmm! Baker Bill baked his lauded rum cake and offered two huge ceramic planting pots. John K gave us apple crosta while John D. brought lemon cakes. The Dingwalls surprised us with ice cream. Who brought the marvelous little meringue cookies??? Too compelling! Thanks to so many people

for supporting and sustaining your fellow DCS'ers.

## MILDEW SOLUTION

Joe Worm aka Steve Nowatarski, swears by Stylet Oil, three tablespoons per gallon of water. Look at the before and after photos. Devi tried Stylet oil last year and claims it is the only treatment that works after mildew infests your dahlias. I just tried it on some of my early tragedies. I had to spray twice, but lo and behold! it worked. Just for DSC, Joe Worm has offered us a great deal: If four people order a quart each in the same order, it's \$56. That makes it \$14 per quart, surely enough for a whole season. So put together a consortium and order: Joe Worm, 200 Violet Street, Masasapequa Park, New York, 11762.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### YOU BE THE JUDGE

Monterey Dahlia Society graciously hosts this summer's judging school, July 19 at the same location as last time; Montessori : 2446 Cabrillo College Dr. Soquel. Contact Kristine Albrecht to reserve your space. 831 566-2523 Judging school helps you appreciate dahlias more, grow them better, and gives you the opportunity to meet other cognoscenti and bloomerati. Put it on your calendar NOW. Free.

### ANNUAL DAHLIA PICNIC

Mark your calendars: Saturday, September 20 for our annual dahlia picnic. Erik has submitted the forms and received the permits for another gala celebration around our beautiful Dahlia Dell

### DAHLIAS DI AMOROSO



Orlando and Deborah picnicked at the Castillo di Amoroso, a magnificent new creation of a 12th century Italian castle in St. Helena. For \$34 you can tour the 3 acres of rooms and taste their wine. Besides their pigs, goats, and sheep and olive trees, they also have a couple of dahlias! Red dahlias look great against this monumental stone edifice. (Let us know if you unexpectedly sight dahlias. Take a picture of yourself and send it to us!)

### NAPA SLICE OF PARADISE

While in the Napa Valley Deborah visited with webmaster Mike. In containers, including indigenous wine barrels, Mike grows several dozen dahlias. In ceramic pots Mike raises heirloom tomatoes in the divide between his next door neighbor. Both share in the harvest. (And more grow in backyard raised beds for his singular enjoyment.) Mike drips his dahlias as well as adding hose water when Napa temperatures soar. Such a loving husband, Mike built a colorful container right out the window where his wife computerizes so every time she looks up for inspiration, voila! dancing posies.



## DAHLIA EXTRAVAGANZA

Our big exhibition/competition will be Aug. 16-17. We need volunteers to set up tables on Friday afternoon and tear them down on Sunday. Please contact John Dale 415-681-7630 if you can help. We also need dahlia enthusiasts to answer the public's questions for 4 shifts: Sat. am and pm and Sun. am and pm. Devi, our master of membership, is looking for someone to assist her in the membership duties: explaining the benefits of joining DSC, accepting membership forms and \$, encouraging participation in People's Choice, and giving directions to the Dahlia Dell.

Who will clerk? The clerks accompany the judges Saturday morning. The clerks document the judges' evaluations and award first and second places. This is a great opportunity to learn more about how judges arrive at their conclusions, meet more bloomerati, experience more cultivars up close and personal, and provide a valuable service to your DSC. Call Deborah to get on the roster: 415-816-2118.

Society	Show dates	Show Location	Flower
San Leandro	Aug. 2-3		Leslie Renee Alpen Pearl
DSC	Aug. 16-17	9th and Lincoln, Golden Gate Park	Lakeview Glow Pooh
Monterey	Aug. 9 or Aug. 23	Soquel HS	Paul z K K Katie
National Dahlia Show	Aug. 30-31	Tacoma, WA	
John Stowel	Sept. 13-14	Valco Mall San Jose	TBD

## SAN MATEO FAIR FLAIR

Congratulations to DJ for winning so many dahlia prizes at the San Mateo Fair including the grand prize, Division Champion with Hollyhill Tigress (ain't she a beauty 😊👉).

Way to go, DJ!



## DELLIZENS

The Dell's blooms beckon people from all over. Annette and John practiced disbudding, pinching out and deadheading before our meeting. Jackie and Sandy both volunteered a couple Saturday mornings to perfect their techniques whilst husbands Nathan walked the dog and Justin acted as bouncer to persistent photographers who wanted to shoot amongst the blooms. A common mistake the

uneducated make is not going down to new growth to dead head. If there is nowhere to grow, the plant stops. This is the most common reason some people's dahlias start turning brown as early as September. The Dancing Girls already posted very clear labels on their treasures for which the public is most grateful. John Edwards, famous for his studio studies of dahlias in the early '90's, cruised by. The Wardens brought pastries for all the volunteers one Saturday. Too thoughtful. If you have dahlia questions, come by some Saturday morning. Sue, Valeria, Pat and Deborah often volunteer then.



Trelyn Rhianon



Jaunty Rolf



Boogy Woogy



Mingus Steven



BJ's Rival



Caproz Jewel of Arlene

## JUBILENT JULY

Dahlias in bloom yeh! By now you should have hearty buds on most of your bushes and actual blooms on many of your plants. For show reasons, I always disbud the two sister bud-dettes next to the main bud. However, Mike and Martha in Half Moon Bay, prefer to remove the center bud and allow the two sister buddettes to thrive. They sell all their cut flowers without leaves; whereas, show blooms MUST have their first leaf pair still on the stem. Deadhead down to new growth; if you fail to do this, your entire plant will fade out by early September. I am lavishing my home beauties with a “cocktail” of liquid fertilizer like fish emulsion with trace elements from one of the hydroponics stores (read marijuana supply stores), a bugicide like Captain Jack or stronger like Malethion, a fungicide like Hoist, Stylet oil or Serenade, and a little superbloom where the N is low, the P is super high, and the K is medium. I spray this concoction all over the leaves AFTER I have thoroughly watered. Spraying in the early morning or later evening after the wind has died down is recommended. The Schelps, Jamie from Aztec, and Bob Papp down in Long Beach rave about the results from spraying compost tea on their beauties. Reaping your harvest: carry a container of water around with you so you can immediately plunge your stem into water. Dahlias crump early because they have gotten air or gunk into their many many wee “straws” they syphon water up with. That’s why you can get 4-5 more prolonged vase days by cutting ¼” off the bottoms of the stems every second day. Moreover, the cleaner your vase, the longer your blooms hold. Try putting your vases through the dishwasher or filling them with water and adding a teaspoon of bleach and allowing them to sit overnight before emptying. Check your clumps for how many stalks you are allowing. Lou rigorously limits his to one. I sometimes allow my open centered clumps to have multiple stalks. But especially with the A and AA’s, limit yourself to one or two stalks. Clean off the bottom ¼ of your plant of leaves. Check the underside of the leaves you strip off; note any bugs, eggs, stippling, or evidence of unwanted population. The cleaner you keep your plants and the ground around them, the fewer bugs and bacteria you attract. Remember that dahlias like to be very wet and then very dry; dahlias will tell you when they want more water by slightly deflating. Again, watering early in the morning or later in the evening is good water husbandry. Fish through the Salvation Army or garage sales for a few Heavy and Shallow containers in which to display your dahlias at our Novice Only Mini Show in August and in our Big Show August 16-17. Sign up for the judging school NOW.

Yours in Dirt,

*Deborah*

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DSC newsletter](#)

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more dahlia information. And if you are  
not a DSC member yet be sure to join.

[sfdahlias.org](http://sfdahlias.org)

