



NEXT MEETING: JUNE 10 at 7:30 PM at 9th and Lincoln. Deborah will give a hands-on disbudding and pinching out lesson at the Dahlia Dell at 6 PM. Program: David Perkins of Lyngso talks about plant nutrition, entitled, "Organic Fertilizers Beyond NPK." Please bring your last tubers/cuttings/milk cartooned beauties for our FINAL DAHLIA SALE. There will also be one-pound bags of calcium nitrate for sale. Who will bring treats to share?

DAHLIAS 101:

DJ Eckelbarger, San Leandro Horticultural Chairman, explained that one day he took a short cut through Golden Gate Park near the Conservatory. The Dahlia Dell stopped him in his tracks. Dr. Erik invited him to our tuber sale. The first year DJ bought and planted a dozen dahlias; only 2 survived. The next year he purchased another dozen AND joined DSC; that year twelve beauties grew. He was hooked. Now he and Peggy grow 72 clumps at Beresford Park on 28th Avenue in San Mateo. Check it out. DJ walked us through his New Year's ritual: separating dahlia seeds from chaff and setting up on wet boards to germinate. His excellent photos demonstrated making cuttings and planting. DJ's "secret sauce" recipe: Some Rose and Flower food 12/6/8, capful of Bayers two or three in one systemic, and bone meal. For stakes, DJ buys 10' lengths of EMT pipe which he cuts in two in the store's parking lot with a hack saw. He paints these green and pops caps on the top so they don't turn into earwig condos. His photos on disbudding made one almost hear the snap as the side buds separated. For his finale, DJ raffled off three blooming dahlias and a cd of his talk. Wow!



No way you say - blooms in May!

LAVISH DAHLIA CHOICES:

Deborah, Devi, Pat and Tony brought over a hundred plants to choose from. Annette, Baker Bill, Deborah and Sue brought hundreds of tubers to nab. What to buy? As Joe said, "We're not a club; we're a cult and dahlias are our addiction." Poodle Skirt, Bubbling Over, Dagmar, Nick Sr., Black Monarch, The Phantom, Ms Zelda, and Parkland Rave whisked off the tables.



"Of course I need a few more"



GENEROSITY OF FRIENDS:



Yet again, the Dingwalls donated a huge box of fresh lemons—so wonderful. Leo brought chocolate chip cookies and Pat brought healthy apples. The Sock-it-to-me cake from Gino and the bakery box of yum-mies from Sohn Ko were gobbled up. Baker Bill surpassed himself by baking a lemon cake, bringing a bag of milk cartons, a box of vases and a hanging orchid. This generosity of things, ideas, and spirit makes DSC continue to thrive.

“Yes mom, these are the nice people from the DSC - No, I know what Joe said, but the C stands for California, not Cult.”

Speaking of the spirit of the DSC, in response to Baker Bill’s email, Lou Cornish in England, Lou wrote, “Lovely to hear from you of course I remember you. Glad to hear

you’re keeping well and Ron and Joann too. I am hoping to come over to SF later this year. My address is Somerford House, Forde Park, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 1DE England.” (Aren’t addresses in England cool!) Drop our past president a note.

STEP UP TO SPONSORSHIP:

DSC is in the process of finalizing our Big Show categories. Is there a favorite dahlia or a type of dahlia or a type of arrangement you’d like to sponsor? Anywhere from \$10 on up. Your name appears in the program guide and you promote dahlias in general and your DSC in specific. For example, the Gaenslers love to support The Largest Dahlia. Deborah always sponsors Best x3 Bicolors. Think about it. Contact any board member. Joe will be happy to accept your check or cash.

NOVICE ONLY MINI SHOW PRACTICE:

Our August meeting traditionally hosts our novice-only mini show. Take this great opportunity to practice filling out your exhibit cards, staging your bloom, placing it in the right place AND getting cogent criticism and praise—and ca\$h. Consider all the reasons to “show” your dahlias. Firstly, you educate your peers as to what various cultivars are available and how they grow in different environments. Secondly, you learn how your gardening compares to other novices’ skills and perhaps, how you can improve. Thirdly, you promote the dahlia aesthetic; that is, by constantly ranking the top varieties, we pursue certain concepts of “desirable.” Over the last two centuries we have genetically selected for stronger stems, lovelier leaves, brighter colors, more interesting forms, greater floriferousness, and better disease/bug resistance. Just think what another century of competition will produce! Lastly, you win praise, ribbons, ca\$h, and fame. So what do you need to prepare? You need a couple containers which can be picked up at Salvation Armies or garage sales; heavy and shallow rules the day. Affix a pin frog. Obviously for A’s and AA’s, you’d use a heavier pot and bigger pin frog than for exhibiting a delicate colorette. In the beginning, Pat declared that she would NEVER compete; she just liked pretty dahlias. However, she entered three or four just to please board members. It changed the whole experience of the show for her. She had “skin in the game.” Ultimately she grew better dahlias as a result of it. AND she had so much fun. So please consider not only practicing with the Novice Only Mini Show, but staging a few for the Big Show, as well. Heed Erik’s sage advice, “90% of success is simply showing up.”



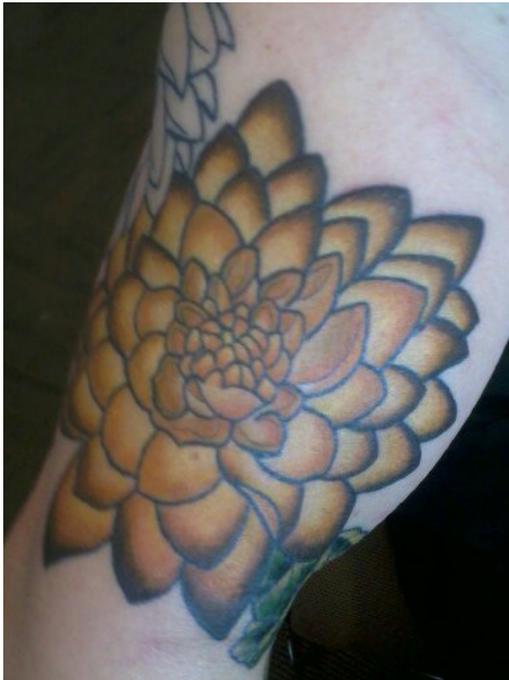
Maybe a category for most colorful pin frog?

YOU BE THE JUDGE:

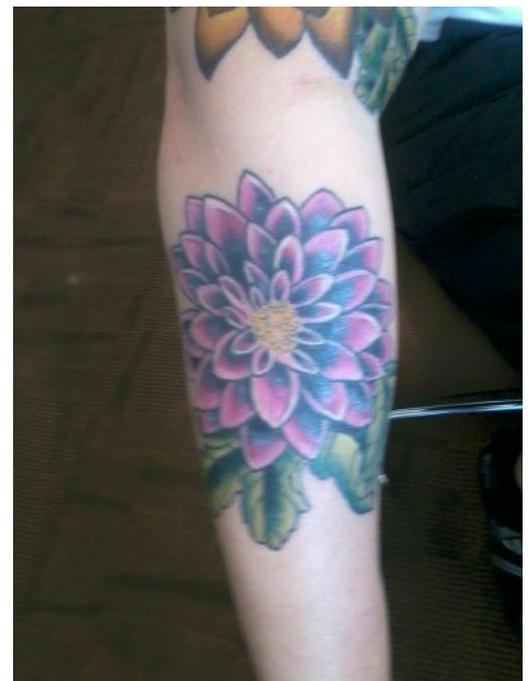
Monterey Dahlia Society graciously hosts this summer's judging school, July 19 at the same location as last time; Montessori : 2446 Cabrillo College Dr. Soquel. Contact Kristine Albrecht to reserve your space. 831 566-2523 Judging school helps you appreciate dahlias more, grow them better, and gives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

MOVING ART:

Dahlia tattoos bloom on beautiful bodies. Check out these from visitors to the dahlia Dell.



And what about the dahlias in the dell? Lou had his first double bloom the first week in May. Astounding. By the second week, Tinnee had a gay collerette and the Dancing Girls had a magnificent Wildwood Marie. Deborah's section flaunted an early achieving Rolf, Elvira, Irish Miss, Sir Richard, CG Finesse, and a whole bouquet of Delta Reds. These heat waves have really spurred on the dahlia development.



JAMMING JUNE:

Last chance to plant dahlias to have them bloom by August's first show time. If you are in gopher-prone areas, do plant in cages. Do spray your favorite cocktail of fertilizer, insecticide and fungicide at least once a month. DJ and I recommend administering a couple cups of water with Calcium Nitrate (1 teaspoon per gallon) at the base of your young plants to green up the leaves and strengthen the stalks. Pinch out or not? I usually pinch out my dahlias to put that extra strength and growth back into the young plant. Pat, Lou and DJ do not. You decide. Definitely disbud. Leave only the central main bud and the first two leaves. Where to cut when you deadhead? Always cut back to new growth, which is ALWAYS below the two leaves that accompany your main bud. If you don't cut to new growth, your plant will die back by early September and you'll wonder what went wrong. For those growing in hot climates (Novato, San Mateo, Hayward) consider erecting shade cloth. Not only does this lower the temperature around your dahlias, it also holds the humidity nearer longer, and protects your blooms from spotting from dew or junk in the air. Get your on-the-ground water system going: drip, pvc, soaker hose or tape. Carter reports that she designed, purchased and built the entire system for her school boxes herself. Way to go! Urban Farmer not only sells components, but offers great advice on how to design and install a system. Numerous YouTube videos show you how. I prefer adjustable emitters so I can give a little water to young plants and more water to bigger plants. Are all your dahlias labeled? !!! Have you made your map with all the spots named? DO IT NOW. Have you set up an XL spread sheet with name, form, color, geographic location, and source yet? DO IT NOW. Lastly, if you have a couple extra plants or tubers, ask yourself who might enjoy your planting one or two in their yards? Ask yourself - what would Bob Papp do?



What's Jon Deitz up to? - you create the caption. Send us your creative caption. We will republish the photo next month along with the most creative caption. [sfdahliasoc@gmail.com]

He potted up fifty one-gallon cans of tubers for my brother Jon and two months later brought them over to Jon's Geodahlia Dome. Bob also volunteers at the VA. Looook how his dahlias light up this veteran's face on the next page. Now its your turn - go forth, light up some faces and spread the joy (addiction) amongst the unconverted.

Yours in Dirt,

Deborah

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DSC newsletter](#)

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



Dahlia Claus and smile creator Bob Papp