



**NEXT MEETING:** November 10 @ 7:30 @ 9th and Lincoln

**Program:** Lou Paradise will reprise his inimitable lessons about digging dividing and storing tuber clumps. There may even be hands-on dividing.

Also, as this year's dahlias perform their swan song, some are already asking for the date of next year's tuber sale. Mark those calendars:

**2016 Annual Dahlia Tuber and Cutting Sale  
April 16. 9:30 AM**

### FORM AND FUNCTION

Frank showed two ADS cd's: one about form and one covering the Fabulous Fifty from 2013. Try taking petals from five or six of your dahlias and looking at each individual petal very carefully. Does it incurve? Does it involute? Does it cone? Does it twist? Can you figure out the type of dahlia just from a single petal???? From that same single petal can you name the cultivar???? Surely if you examined an incurved bright yellow petal with shocking red tips you might ascertain that this came from the infamous Jessica, right? These are worthy identification goals for a REAL dahlia-ista to work towards. Pop by the Dell on a Saturday morning and Deborah will quiz you depending on what's still blooming. Each year the ADS publishes their Fabulous Fifty list: which cultivars earned 50 blue or higher awards in the previous show season. These tend to be great dahlias to grow in all regions of the country.



### GENEROSITY OF FRIENDS



What a way to kick off the holiday season with so many fine goodies. Thanks to Leo for the chocolate chip and m&m cookies; and to Devi for her delicious pumpkin cupcakes—so seasonal. Maggie's cheese chocolate balls proved quite the hit. John D donated blueberry poundcake which went well with Annette and John's brownies. Thinking we all need to eat better, Pat slipped in some Grapefruit Omega Treats. Gino's pudding cake balanced Debby's watermelon. Devi divvied out many zucchini from her garden, raffeling off the largest one. Lucky Leo won it, promising to bake zucchini lasagna soon. Thank you all for tantalizing your fellow DCSers.

### LOU IS GOLDEN!

We treasure our Lou Paradise for his amazing hybrids, his work on our show schedule, his wisdom at judging workshops, his's wife's computation of our shows' results, and his fabulous dahlias in the Dell. On the national level, Lou compiles, verifies, and organizes the ADS Classification Book EVERY YEAR for a long time. For his amazing services to the American Dahlia Society, our Lou was awarded ADS's Gold Medal at our One Hundredth Anniversary in New York this past September. No one deserved it more.



## MANI TRANSPORTED

John and Donna Mani moved to Thousand Oaks last year. You can take the Man out of his dahlia bed, but you can't keep the Mani from his favorite flower. John writes:

I want to relate some interesting facts about my dahlia experience here in Thousand Oaks, Ca. When I arrived here in Sept. 2015 immediately went to the garden warden, a resident who was in charge of the planting area. Our garden area is 200 feet long and 40 feet wide with long rows of raised planters 3 feet high, each measuring 4 feet wide and 8 feet long. Each with a water spigot. There are a total of 44 of these raised



plots, with 500 residents, there is waiting list. I begged and begged and finally received one plot. Not nearly enough so I begged for space along side a border fence and was allowed to build a 10 foot long, 22 inch wide and 2 feet deep raised planter of treated redwood plus room for ten 15 gallon plastic round containers. Enough room for me to plant about 50 tubers, planting sometimes 2 tubers to a pot with stakes plus labels.

The original raised wooden 4 x 8 foot bed was made of RR ties. Big, thick, and sturdy. I dug out the old dirt, it was clay, with rocks

and junk. I bought a small wheelbarrow & shovel and starting digging. I wheelbarrowed the dirt outside the planting area and disposed of it into a large riparian ditch nearby. This effort took me one week. I then went to the internet and found a soil contractor nearby and went to look at his soils. He had mixed up various "batches" of soil containing amendments and composted material.

I found a suitable mix and began to fill up the back of my SUV with dirt in cardboard boxes. Meanwhile, on the internet I purchased 10 15-gallon black plastic pots and lined them along the fence next to my 10 foot long planter. I bought some wire mesh and meshed the bottom of all of the containers and planters as an anti-varmint precaution. It took 12 trips to the soils place and wheelbarrowing the dirt into the planters and pots before I was ready to plant. 2 weeks of hard work and lots of back ache and old groaning bones. I went to a lumber supply and had them cut up 3/8 in. diameter rebar for stakes 4 feet long, 40 of them. I purchased some drip line tubing, fittings, and a timer/controller, battery run. I purchased many rolls of 1 wide copper tape to line the edges of all the containers as an anti-slug measure. I planted all of my tubers, 52, with stakes and labels. A handful of suitable fertilized was added and I was careful not to water to avoid tuber rot. Just as I had done so many years in Marin County area.



Then I waited and waited and waited, and waited some more but..... nothing grew. I planted in mid-March and by the end of May—No Growth!! What was wrong? In anger, I turned on the water clock controller for 10 minutes 3 x's per week to try and drown my frustration and the damned tubers that wouldn't grow. To my amazement within 2-3 weeks I had incredible growth!! My plants sprouted up and eventually reached 6 feet with lots of blooms and now, towards the end of October, everything is still blooming. Some grew stalks as thick as my wrist. Somehow, the dirt I purchased was too dry?? I followed the old adage, "don't water until you see good growth". I guess in this warmer climate and with new dry soil I had to amend that plan a bit.

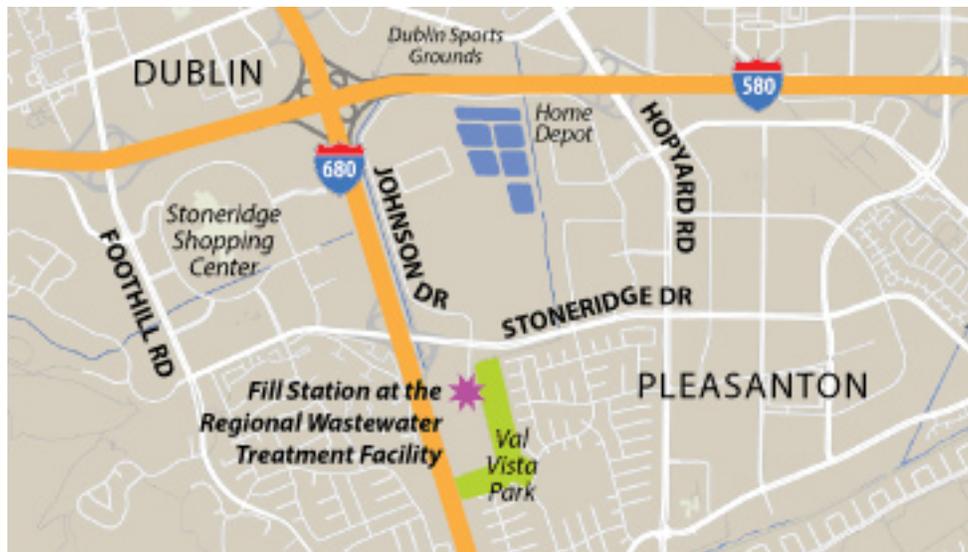
But in the end I had plenty of nice blooms to distribute to everyone. So all's well that ends well. I have become the "dahlia genius" of our community because no one else grows them in any volume and variety. Now, everyone wants me to give them some tubers. Looks like I'll have fun at "dig out time", but how Donna and I will miss the excitement of the SF society tuber dig out."

## GREY WATER: GREEN GARDEN

Louise Henrickson reports on a unique program the Dublin/San Ramon water department initiated to assuage the brown horror caused by our continuing drought. The official notice reads, “During the drought emergency, residents can pick up free recycled water from the DSRSD residential fill stations to water home landscaping.” Louise writes, “They allow anyone to get up to 300 gallons of water at a time, as many times a day as desired, without cost. If you want more – there is a commercial-use charge. You have to take a short training class on site about the use of the water since it is not potable water. There were days earlier in the summer when the lines were long, but they are open longer hours now in both Pleasanton and Dublin so lines are not as long as these pictures from July 3rd (when they were the longest of the summer). You don’t have to be from this water district. I live close to the facility and everyone in our neighborhood who has a pick-up truck has a tank on the back and gets water. People scrambled to find cost-effective tanks. Ends up that many chemicals ship in these tanks, like car-wash soap, so it wasn’t too hard to find the tanks for around \$100 dollars. And Home Depo started stocking them. People that don’t have pickup trucks are using carboys or 5-gallon buckets with lids and filling those: Carboys in the trunk of cars, pickups with tanks or barrels, SUVs pulling trailers with tanks.” According to the DSRSD they have given away over 25 MILLION gallons of water. [\(You can learn more about the program here.\)](#)



Louise speculates: One reason they may be willing to do this - besides the public service – is that it costs the water department to pump this recycled water to the Bay. They pump it over the East Bay hills to get it to the Bay – so this program saves them the cost of pumping. They told us at a class a year ago or so that the electricity costs for pumping was their highest cost.



## FIFTEEN MINUTES OF FAME

San Mateo shows its pride for DJ and Peg with a lovely article in their local paper. [Follow this link to read the article complete with pix.](#)

## DUES DUE

DSC offers you 3 big inducements to get your 2015 membership form and check in EARLY. If Devi gets your form and money by our holiday party, you receive 3 raffle tickets for gift certificates to our April Tuber Sale. We will raffle off the certificates, worth \$25, \$20 and \$15, at the February meeting. (Wow!) If received by our January meeting, you get 2 raffle chances; if received by the end of January, 1 raffle ticket. The end of January also means you'll receive your ADS Classification Book when it is released by the ADS. So: DO IT NOW. {[Click for membership form](#)} Fill it out. Add a check. Voila! taken care of for another year.

For the Dahlia Society of California only:

Includes mostly monthly e-newsletters, hands-on learning at The Dell, and participation in our August Exhibition/Competition

Individual Membership .....\$10.00

Family Membership .....\$15.00

For the Dahlia Society of California AND American Dahlia Society (includes ADS Classification Book and quarterly Bulletins):

Individual Membership .....\$34.00

Family Membership .....\$42.00

Applications are accepted for both societies, or the DSC only. Combined membership includes ADS at a discounted rate only available in conjunction with local society membership.

## NEWSFLASH!

This just in!!: DSC President, Tinnee Lee, dramatically announced a new program aimed at increasing DSC and ADS membership. Instead of looking outside our membership to increase enrollment numbers, Ms. Lee announced a bold and innovative plan to grow numbers from WITHIN! "We've shown that we can hybridize and produce new dahlias, why can't we do the same with members?" she asked nobody in particular.

The cover was inadvertently blown off this heretofore secret program at the recent DSC 2015 show. Jackie Duhe and her husband, Nathan Niebergall, had evidently been working covertly on their own breeding program to jump-start Ms Lee's public mandate and chose this date to introduce their fledgling effort. Liana was seated with her mother and seed parent, Jackie, at the main administrative table and quite unexpectedly was voted winner of the People's Choice selection. We believe this to be an historical event, a first year seedling winning a major prize in an ADS show!

(Some of this flash reported by the inimitable Frank is true.)



## FLORIGANZA CAUGHT ON VIDEO

[Check out Chris Duderstadt's lovely rendition of our August Show at vimeo.com](#)

Thank you, Chris, for sharing this with us.

## DAHIA DELL DOINGS

Many visitors have asked why the South Section seems to have gone to seed. As many of you know, Lou Paradise hybridizes dahlias, such as Eden Barbarosa, Prometheus and Pink Paradise. To create these new varieties, Lou needs SEEDS. Besides harvesting seeds, Lou also sacrifices his tuber clumps on the cutting table beginning in January. He, Devi and Pat produce those luscious cuttings we drool over at our Tuber Sales. Pat says the heat waves have made it tough to keep enough water on her beauties this season. Nevertheless her Santa Claus and Abbey beguile the public. Tinnee gave her lovelies one more round of foliar feeding to keep them in fine fettle through Halloween. Her Eden Benary and black-eyed seedling continue to stun. Dahlia afficianados adore Sue and Valeria's collection because their labels are so legible. Their Fern Irene, w/ yel, acts as a beacon; Blown Dry and Bumble Rumble dance in their front row chorus line. Watercolorist, Kevin Woodson, immortalized their fabulous Bode as well as AC Rooster, Mexico and Maki. On Oct. 20th, Deborah counted



12 Nick Sr.s on one 5 ½' tall plant. Eden Talos, Beer creek Sunrise, AC Abbey, and Bloomquist Paul continue to thrive.

Volunteer, Sarah B, commented, "Still so many to dead-head." Newbie, John P reverently manicured prolific Elvira as a warm up before tackling the "Petting Zoo," AKA the fence dahlias. Besides his normal tasks, Billy dug great compost holes and coiled a mean hose.



Lou Paradise's secret greenhouse

## NOVEMBER NOTIONS

**STOP watering.** Purportedly we should be encountering wet wet wet El Nino soon. It's even recommended that in home gardens, any dahlia that has turned brown, cut back to 5 notches and cover with a 5-gallon bucket. IF you want to collect dahlia seeds, select which blooms to let loose petals, close up, and turn brown.

If you have a greenhouse equipped with lights, you might try taking cuttings from low on the stems of still green stalks. Either pop the spouts into wedges of oasis or directly into 2"x2" little starter pots. Do use complex, highly composted soil with perlite or vermiculite to loosen it up. These should immediately be exposed to 18 hour lights. If all goes well, you could even take cuttings from these cuttings in February to further increase your stock.

Check your labels: are they really what you thought they should be? Is your label still legible or does it need touching up. I find that pencil doesn't degrade the way Sharpie can. Rogue: if you have multiples of certain cultivars, judge which is the BEST. When I toured Swan Island's 55 acres of dahlias, I noted that they would plant 100 of the same variety in a long and gorgeous row. Inevitably, a couple scraggled behind the others; but equally inevitably four or five plants towered over the rest. Swan Island makes cuttings of these superior versions for their next year's planting, thus always enhancing the cultivar each season. You can do the same on a slightly smaller scale.

Yours in Dirt,

*Deborah*

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In 1917  
In San Francisco

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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](http://sfdahlias.org)

