



TUBER AND PLANT SALE: Sat. April 3. 9-Noon at Golden Gate Park's Fair Grounds Building at 9th and Lincoln. Tubers \$3 or a dozen for \$30; plants \$5 each.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, 13 April @ 7:30 @ 9th and Lincoln.



PROGRAM - A Year in Dahlias, a colorful overview of how to choose and care for dahlias the year around. Bring your friends and anyone else interested in growing our favorite flower. Bring any extra tubers or plants for sale to support your benevolent society. Who will bring comestibles for our gustatory delight?

STRESS FREE GROWING FOR PLANT AND PERSON:

Jim Barrett demonstrated how to fabricate a new style container. Jim takes two buckets of equal size and installs a wicking basket which he buys at the hydroponics store. "The smaller the bucket, the smaller the wicking basket," Jim explained. He packs the wicking basket with potting soil and fits it into the mother bucket with roughly 1/4 of the total volume below the level of the second bucket. He drills a small hole just below the level of the second bucket to act as an overflow or "pee hole." He plants the inside container just like he would any other receptacle. The innovation here is that Jim installs a watering tube down the side of the mother container. Jim recommends covering this watering tube when not in use. Jim's snazzy rig brings several advantages: 1. He only has to water every 7-10. 2. Because he drastically cuts down on evaporation, he uses up to 75% less water (thus saving \$\$). 3. His fertilizer does not seep out wasted. 4. His containers have a 5-7 year life or more if put out of the sun when not in use. 5. By putting DuPont fabric weed guard between the wicking basket and the rest of the dirt, Jim can "dig" up his tubers very simply. Jim suggests Chinese noodle houses or bakeries for free nesting baskets with #2 codes on them meaning safe to hold food products. Kathy suggested SF SCRAP, where they recycle art items. Last year Jim grew cherry tomatoes and a lovely dahlia in his two containers and showed us a PowerPoint of last years successes. This year he's experimenting with different sizes. Frank arranges the BEST programs for us!



[Click here for a diagram of Jim's growing containers](#)

[Click here for more photos from Jim's demonstration](#)

BEASTS FROM THE DEEP:

Gophers ravage dahlia gardens. Grrrr! Tinnee shared many of the methods she's tried over the years defending her precious treasures on the Hillside in Golden Gate Park and in her yard in Corralitos. Well fed gophers can be smited with a shovel. (Sounds gross but it's amazing how satisfying this can feel!) For Valentine's Day Tinnee received traps, both Macabee and clutch with which she nailed 63 gobbling terrors last year. Dry ice into the tunnels can suffocate these marauders. However, Tinnee has developed a great cage for your plants. Using 1/2" hardware cloth strip, cut flaps at one end. Secure the sides of your cylinder (wire or nylon cable ties). Fold the bottom flaps inwards but **DO NOT SECURE**. Dig your hole. At the bottom of your hole, place another piece of hardware cloth as big as the bottom of your gopher cage. Yes, put it in first, then put your protective cage over the top of it so when a



wretch tries to burrow in from below, it bumps this outer bottom and pushes it upwards towards the



cage: foiled again! Ha! Now add some dirt and plant your dahlia. Do leave about 2-3" of hardware cloth emerging above the ground to prevent wily varmints from diving in over the top. The beauty of Tinnee's improved gopher cage manifests at DigOut. Simply cut the cable ties and unwind the hardware cloth; your tubers extricate more easily and with less damage than traditional enclosures. Helpful hint: wear heavy gloves and use wire snips with hardware cloth to prevent biteback.



[Click here for more photos from Tinnee's presentation](#)

DAHILIA TUBER AND PLANT SALE:

Saturday, April 3 in the auditorium at 9th and Lincoln. Volunteers on the set-up list please arrive by 8 am. We have but a brief 45 minutes to set up if we want a 15 minute lightening buying spree before the public arrives at 9 am. It would be helpful to bring an ADS Classification book, a bottle of ink in a pencil, a magnifying lens, your helpful attitude AND a yummy potluck item to share for lunch. We would surely appreciate help on Friday between 10:30 and noon to set up tables and lay out plants. Your labeled tubers would greatly benefit your DSC. Please print the linked flyer to post around town so as many people as possible come to our sale. Invite your friends and neighbors! Remember that all dahlias in the auditorium are for sale. Please do your swapping outside in the parking lot.



The flyer features the title "DAHILIA SALE" in large, multi-colored letters (D: pink, A: orange, H: yellow, L: green, I: blue, A: purple, S: pink, A: orange, L: yellow, E: green). Below the title is the text "Dahlia Society of California". A large, close-up photograph of a multi-petaled dahlia flower in shades of orange, yellow, and pink occupies the center. Below the photo is the website "www.sfdahlia.org". To the left, there are two green sun-like icons. The first icon is next to a blue-bordered box containing the text "Tuber \$3". The second icon is next to a pink-bordered box containing the text "Cutting \$5". To the right, a decorative green dashed border contains the text: "Saturday April 3", "9th and Lincoln Way", "San Francisco", and "9:00-11 AM".

DAHILIA SALE
Dahlia Society of California



www.sfdahlia.org

 **Tuber**
\$3

 **Cutting**
\$5

Saturday April 3
9th and Lincoln Way
San Francisco
9:00-11 AM

Click [here](#) to download a copy of the flyer you can share with your friends.

GROW BEAUTIFUL; GROW SMART:

The box scores for Pacific Southwest Dahlia Conference shows are out! Karen Zydner has sliced and diced the data three ways to help you make the best choice on what to put in your garden. These winners tend to have stronger stems, better color, more disease resistance, and just better dispositions! Why grow “dog pound dahlias” when you could be featuring Best of Shows all over your patch?

[Click here to see the Pacific SouthWest Dahlia Conference](#)

[2009 Winning Cultivars by Class.](#)
[PSW Top Twenty by Rank](#)
[PSW Court of Honor by Society](#)
[Hall of Fame](#)

PLOT YOUR PLOT; PLANT YOUR PLANTS:



Plant with orientation to the sun: Highest Plants in back, shortest in front. Some plants are tall and skinny like Chimacum Troy but others like Vernon Rose are very very bushy. So there is not set spacing although 3' from stake to stake is a good safety measure. Pound your stake **BEFORE** you place your tuber or cutting in its hole lest you impale it. When I receive small cuttings, I like to transfer them to a larger 4x4" or 6x6" pot to establish more root mass before I put them in the Dell, although technically cuttings can go directly into the garden. If you hope for tubers from your cutting, cover the first pair of leaves with dirt. Remember, cuttings need water every day for the first 2-3 weeks or they will dry out—their hair fine roots can only absorb a limited amount of moisture at one time. If it's really hot, cuttings should be watered twice a day. Plant tubers at least 6-8" deep. I usually only cover with 4-6" of soil and fill in later as the dahlia grows. I do not water tubers at all until I see a green sprout but other people recommend an initial light sprinkle and then no more water until germination. Tubers have no roots at all to begin with and will just become mush with too much moisture around them. Whether cuttings or tubers, definitely be proactive about slug, snail and heinous earwig protection. Label immediately. As Lou P. admonishes, "A dahlia without a name is just another weed."

FLASH! ADS FOTO WINNERS:

Word is in: ADS crowns DSC people! 19 shutterbugs submitted 230 pix. Our DJ won honorable mention for his macro "Let's Pollinate." Franck scooped up TEN awards including a second for Dahlia Portrait of Dan's Alpen Fury and a Big Blue for his Dahlia Personalities of judges checking out huge Edna C's at the National Show. More DSCers should enter this contest! We have great blooms and great personalities. All entries are digital this year so start snapping.



CUTTING SEMINAR:

Attracting students from as far off as Long Beach, Lou L. once again gave a great course on how to make cuttings. Lou uses pot roots he's over wintered and some of Deborah's milk cartooned beauties from her greenhouse. He prepares his rooting medium in advance. He admonishes clean (not completely sterile) technique by dipping scalpels with Clorox™ between plants. When all the cuttings have been tucked into their 2x2" new homes, Lou puts Seran Wrap over the top "like a shower cap" and pops the whole caboodle into his SuzieBake Greenhouse. He does not open their enclosure for 3 weeks! We hope to see the over 200 lovely cuttings Lou and his students produced at our Tuber and Plant sale.



[Click here for more pictures from this year's cutting seminar](#)



APRIL ALREADY?

What glorious balmy weather we've been enjoying. My tubers have sprouted like crazy and my milk cartons have germinated. If dahlias have grown leggy in the greenhouse, make a tip cutting. Devorah's cuttings enjoy gentle spritzing in her garage green house. Soc uses his garage greenhouse to germinate his special tubers with the extra heat. Once topped, I "harden off" my dahlias as they come out of the greenhouse, safely acclimating them to the outside. Everything gets a dose of Bayer's 3 in One soil drench to make sure there's no bugs lurking in the soil and to abate early mildew. Orlando built me a retractable rain cover for my south-facing front balcony which is the perfect cold frame. It allows lots of light and holds some warmth, but prevents rain from drowning my newly exposed plants. Alas, both my front and back decks almost overflow with items for our Tuber and Plant Sale. In the garden, sophomores (dahlia's which have over wintered in the soil) are popping up. Immediately I put snail, slug and earwig bait around them. You can use a Corry's or a greener but more costly solution, Sluggo Plus. As a satisfied Philip says, "It really works! I hate those earwigs!" I also invert metal hanging basket frames around them to thwart kitties who love the worked soil. I'm experimenting with worm casings from Bob Papp worked into the top layer of my rammed earthen raised beds. Bunny poop, utterly gourmet manure, proves a sumptuous top dressing. Remember: Cuttings need water almost every day for the first 2-3 weeks; tuber plants need far far less. Plant accordingly. Dahlia seeds can be germinated between two wet paper towels. Each sprung sprout can then be tweezered into its own 2" or 4x4" pot. Gordie Leroux (of Kenora Prowess) used to plant all his first year seedlings in 4x4's chockablock in a row buried in the dirt. They produced great flowers and made chucking or pot root saving very easy. Seedlings are like cuttings: very few roots to begin with so frequent spritzings help keep them hydrated. Go forth and Plant!!!



Yours in Dirt,
Deborah

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

Originally Organized
In 1917
In San Francisco

Dahlia was adopted as the
Official Flower of San Francisco
On October 4, 1926
By its Board of Supervisor

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