



NEXT MEETING: 12 June. Program: Mike Pettinari, Pacifica Master Gardener will instruct us in the best composting practices. Great information for all of us. Who will bring goodies to share?

Ron may bring a whole new dimension to dahlia raffle.....

Hands on grooming seminar at Dell 6:30PM; Deborah will show how to pinch out centers, disbud and deadhead.

SECOND CHANCE EXTRAVAGANZA

Wow! Devi and Tin outdid themselves with the forest of lush, robust cuttings! Deborah added a couple



dozen along with the sprouted tubers from our original sale. Chad and Sue





donated more sprouters to go along with the thirteen flats of glorious pot roots from the greenhouse. Soc sat in front of his incurved cactus biggies so he could pounce. Our customers shouted out the countdown, “10, 9, 8...” And then havoc let loose. Growers filled Tinnee’s “shopping carts” as fast as they could lean in and grab. By

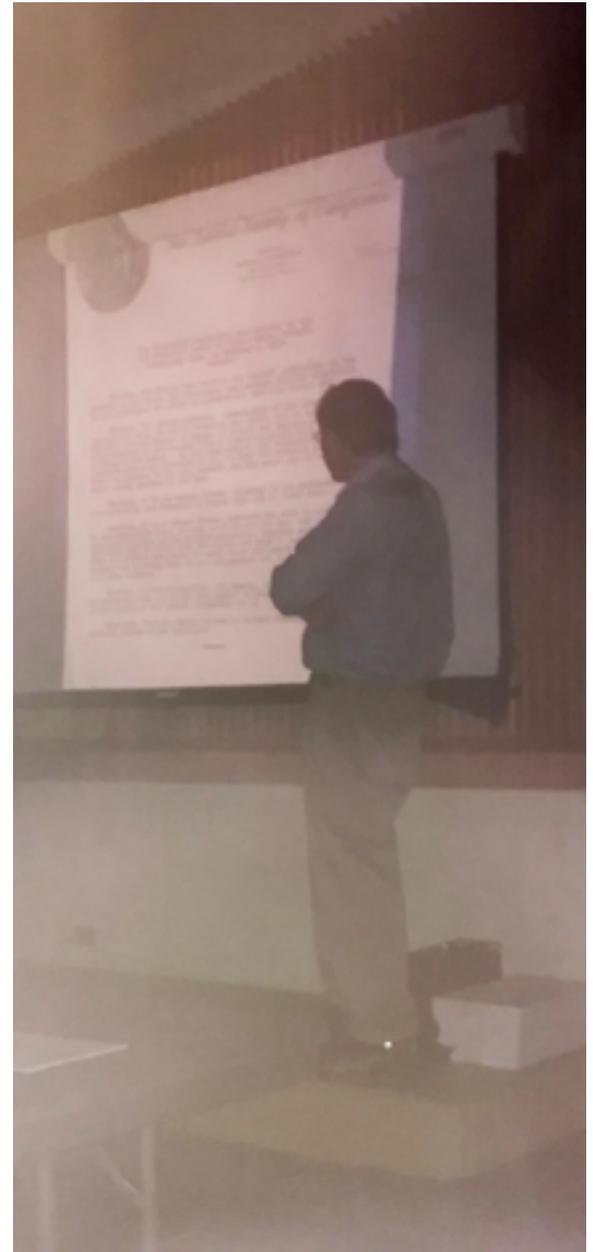


evening’s end, there were only a few leaves on the tables. Just amazing. Thank you to everyone who helped get pedigreed, competition dahlias into the hands of growers and to those who

filled our coffers. We can pay for our meeting room (meeting rooms with parking in San Francisco do NOT come cheaply!), our Big Show Gallery, our ribbons, our ca\$h prize\$, our utensils, plates, cups and our gorgeous posters. So well done by so many for so many!

STROLL THROUGH 500 YEARS OF DAHLIA LORE

What didn't raconteur Erik cover? Both informative and amusing, Dr. G introduced us to the Chihuahuas and Great Danes of the dahlia world. He led us from the conquistador's, commercial growers in SF in the '20's, making the dahlia the official flower of San Francisco to bidding to name the latest Lou Paradise introduction after a loved one. One step at a time he showed us how to bottom water with drip or soaker hoses, how to stake and label, to deftly disbud, how to exhibit, and finally how to dig and divide. Erik exhorted, "Water in the morning and foliar feed in the evening."



GENEROSITY OF FRIENDS

If Tin, Devi, Pat, Lou and Deborah hadn't been cosseting wee sprigs since DECEMBER, we would not have such an abundant sale. Please thank them personally so they know how much you appreciate what they've done for DSC! Devi's library of enticing photos FRAMED! reel in our buyers. Staying abreast of our collection in itself is a huge task. We are indebted to Devi's attention to detail. Thank you, too, to Gino for his rugala. Who lavished us with Pepperidge Farm cookies and with jam-in-the-hole cookies? MMMMM. We loved the mandarin oranges and fresh strawberries. Ron—you did it again—a whole box of luscious Meyer lemons! Thank you to everyone who sent out Second Chance emails and invited friends and colleagues.

ADS FABULOUS CONFABULATION

Milpitis hosted the annual Spring Workshop of the American Dahlia Society, including major bloomerati: President, Don Darmstedt; Past Prez, Jerry Landerholm; Web Mistress, Sharon Swaney;



Membership impresario, Alan Fischer; ADS Secretary, Theresa Schroeder; ADS Bulletin Editor/Wrangler, Linda Holmes-Cook; Judging Chair, Bob Schroeder; and First VP, Mark Oldenkamp who brought a huge box of truly snazzy cuttings to share with everyone. Such generosity! Past Prez, Ron Miner, led a rousing discussion on the use of



“Distinction” points in seedling judges. Judges had decreased the subjectivity in these 5 points but allocating points for

probably being able to take a blue in its color class on up to all 5 points for probably being able to win Best in Show. Some judges had been using these 5 points as fudgers: i.e. throwing them in at the end to make sure a dahlia manages to get the 85 total to qualify. Deborah passionately railed that Distinction



should be just that: something so remarkable and distinct that everyone would recognize that variety. For example, the odd barley shaped petals of Valley Porcupine; the alien weirdness of HH Spider Woman; the remarkable variegation of Rolf; the

dazzling red/yellow of Jessica; the ethereal transparency of Porcelain. “Like pornography,” she pleaded, “I might not be able to define it, but I surely know it when I see it.” The controversy continues.

GENOME GERMINATION

Dr. Virginia Walbot led us on her 3 trips to Mexico to scout out species dahlias and to obtain seeds from them. The Mexican government severely limits the amount of seeds one can bring across the boarder. She loved the “mystery seeds” from plants without flowers. Dr. Dayle Saar from Kentucky, master taxonomist, keyed out the varieties as they bloomed. Kristine Albrecht



brought 8 examples of species dahlias she is growing to help Dr. Walbot with her “citizen science.” They need volunteers to help grow out species and dark foliage dahlias that can be

given to schools next spring for them to pursue experiments. So far in the English cannon, there are 19 distinct dahlia species recognized and defined.

THRIP TRIP



According to Dr. Hanu Papu, thrips are the worst virus vectors. They feed on the pollen of virused plants. With only a two week life cycle, they can build dreadful numbers quickly. Different BIG GUNS work at different stages of thrips' development. Spinosad helps. Dr. Papu suggest putting out yellow sticky cards to see

what you catch and try to fend off an invasion early. He also warned that leaf minor makes dahlias susceptible to bacterial infections. Be vigilant and only treat affected plants.

IMITATION IS THE SINCEREST FORM...

Maggie nabbed one of the cool bookmarks the Monterey Bay Dahlia Society handed out at their show. She asked our DSC board, "Why don't we use something like this to celebrate DSC and alert people to our website, our meetings and our show?" Maggie collaborated with Tinnee to produce these lovely bookmarks. Make sure you get one! Great initiative Maggie! Hope more DSCers share their good ideas.



Left photo: Erik Juul, Dahlia Dell, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco
Right photo: 20 forms of dahlias. Blooms courtesy of Corralitos Gardens
Copyright Tinnee Lee. All right

GREENHOUSE MAGIC



several prime clumps. Deborah and Cathy donated particularly good A and AA



spent hours adhering the labels to color-coded wee sticks. Tinnee and Lou prepared flats of 16 4x4's with special potting mix, well wet down. Twice a week, master Lou, assessed the crop and decided which were ready to be snipped. Devi potted up the

Lou put most of his tubers on the cutting bench just after Christmas. Devi donated many many pot roots. Pat brought



varieties. First they organized everything by size and waited for them to sprout out. Lou printed up pages of labels; Pat



snipped sprouts and Pat recorded the harvest in her ledger. Tin sank in the correct label and then the flats were transferred out to the misting room, where they were gently wafted with light “rain” several times a day. The day before our sale various members like Tony came in their trucks and helped transport bunches and bunches of flats. Since the greenhouses are not open at night, Tinnee and Devi had to scoop up the myriad flats on Tuesday morning in order to bring the feast of fine cuttings to our last meeting. What a Labor of Love! Thank you soooooo much for your tremendous involvement of energy, time and resources.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dahlia Society of California, Aug. 18-19, 2018
9th Ave. & Lincoln Way, SF, The Gallery
Flowers of the Year:
Olivia Maureen & Rae Meister

Monterey Bay Dahlia Society, Aug. 25-26
Museum of Art & History
705 Font St., Santa Cruz 95060
Flowers of the Year:
Dark Sider & Cobequid Celestial Star

San Leandro Dahlia Society, Sept. 8-9
San Leandro Library
300 Estudillo Ave., San Leandro 94577
Flowers of the Year:
Olivia Maureen & Les Pinkham

Heirloom Expo, Sept. 11-12-13
Santa Rosa Fairgrounds
\$2000 and great ribbons. Free admission to the fair.

DSC Annual Dahlia Dell Potluck Picnic
Sept. 8 Noon to 5 PM

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD](#)

DAHLIA THERAPY

Erik spotted an entire Victorian house presumably dedicated to Dahlia Therapy. What could this be?



BOY SCOUT GOOD DEED

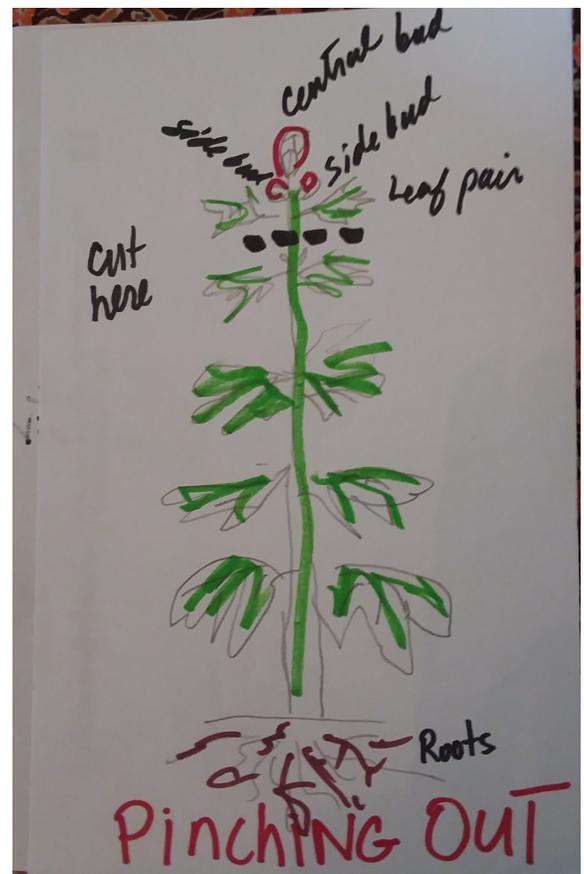
Needing a few more moments of public service, James, a classmate of Nicolas, weeded the Dell entry and pathway. He

quite conscientiously got out all the roots, sifting the dirt on a black flat, and collecting the pebbles for rejection. Thank you, good scout, James. Come back any time—there are lots of weeds that need your painstaking attention.



GEMS IN JUNE ?

Might you have blooms in June? If you left any clumps in, you just might! John P's Elfin greeted strollers in early April. Patricia's second year Prometheus was blooming by April 18.th Deborah has 3 sophmores colorfully dancing in the breeze: Lakeview Glow, Lulu Island Mom and Elvira. Sue, Paula, Carl and Phil have bunches of buds already. So it's time to pinch out and disbud. Pinching out is taking out the center in order to establish better roots and a bushier plant.





How top of plant looks before pinching out



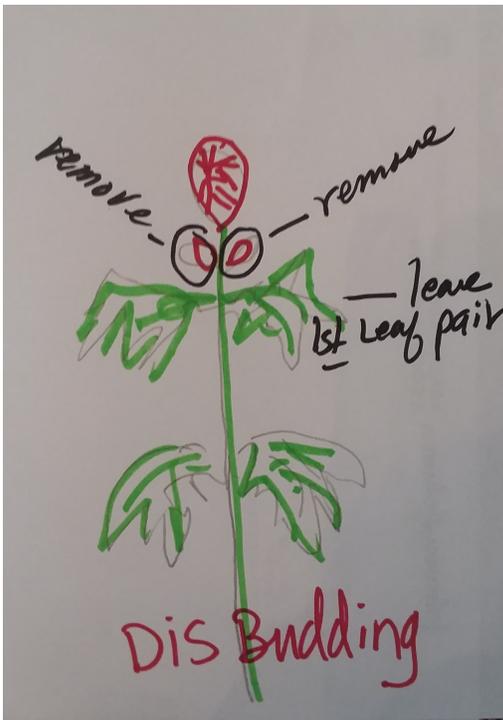
Removing the top - pinching out or stopping



Top of plant after pinching out. Notice the two incipient branches between the leaves

Devi pinches when she has 5 leaf pairs. She takes out the top pair. I usually wait until I can discern the first bud. Then I remove the central bud, the two buds on either side, and the two leaves below them. Steel yourself; it's hard to eliminate the first bud when you're so excited to see the first bloom but it really does engender a heartier plant. Besides, most often the first bloom is stuck down in the center of your clump, on a stubby stem—basically useless and obscured—the dahlia term for this sad effect is “crotch bound.” Disbudding? Why? By

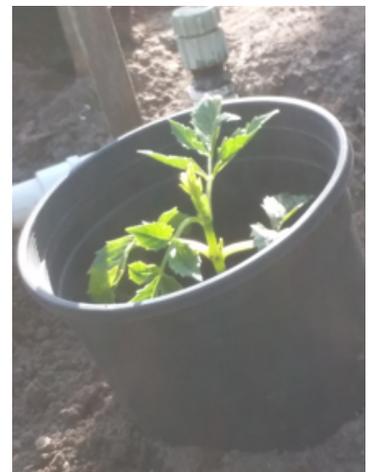
limiting one flower per leaf pair, you get a bigger bloom, stronger and longer stem, and better spacing. Consider it



dahlia meditation therapy. Before your bloom begins to drop petals, dead head it. Cut **BELOW** the first pair of leaves but above where the two new stems/sprouts are coming out. Deadheading releases hormones that tell the dahlia that it has not made seeds yet and needs to produce another chance at immortality. Righteous deadheading encourages more flowers! Cocktail time! Dahlias benefit from foliar feeding because their leaves can take in nutrients as well as their roots. In my big sprayer, I have combined a liquid fertilizer (I'm trying Tiger Blood for establishing

hearty roots), and dishwashing soap—not detergent. In mid-June I'll add Stylet Oil to prevent mildew. The soap acts as a sticker to keep your solution on the leaves and not drip to the ground; also the soap coats any eggs or nascent bugs that might have thoughts of colonizing your precious dahlias. It's a green prophylactic. If you have access to worm or compost tea, definitely add that to your cocktail. I keep a smaller spritzer bottle that contains the liquid fertilizer, the soap and Captain Jack's Dead Bug. I use this **ONLY** on the clumps which are attacked by biting bugs—you can see the holes or the crinkled leaves—often from aphid invasion. Captain Jack's Dead Bug thwarts leaf miner and thrips—both nasty virus vectors. Hissssss! Adhere to Erik's admonition: water in the morning and spray in the evening.

If you plant a fragile dahlia or one with a long neck, you might slip a milk carton or half gallon sleeve (removing the bottom to form a



cylinder) around the plant. Later, after it's well rooted and stronger, you can remove the defensive bulwark. Alas, I have been getting reports of heinous gopher sorties. ALL of the dahlias on the Dell's hillside are in gopher cages. They really work! I just divided 3 of Tin's plants and marveled again at her elegant cage design. With 2 snips I set free the root mass. [Check out this article that shows how to make these cages.](#) Why do gophers know which dahlias you paid the most money for and can hardly wait to bloom? These are invariably the ones they eat first. Is anyone in our society a good gopher catcher? We have members who would gladly pay for this removal service. Let me know, please if you or someone you know might make garden rescue calls. GRRRR.



Marilyn and Phil's April Abundance

Yours in Dirt,

Deborah

Photo Credits: Dietz, Gaensler, Joseph, Kaiser

Special thanks to Connie Thompson for her Pinching pix

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