



NEXT MEETING: PARTY PARTY PARTY! Our annual winter holiday party commences **at 6:30**. If you have some decorations or want to help set things up, please come a little earlier. Please bring a pot luck dish and a wrapped gift relating to dahlias or gardening in general (around \$10). Don your glad rags, whip up a little razzle dazzle, and come party with your fellow DSC dahlia growers.

LOU LOWERS THE SHOVELS!

Lou reprised his excellent show and tell discussion about digging, dividing and storing tubers. First off, Lou recommends only digging the clumps you can process that very same day, because the eyes disappear 8-24 hours after disinterring.



Lou pantomimed how he first cuts a deep circle with a 12" radius around the clump to sever any longer roots; using a 2-shovel pincer

technique, Lou prizes up the clump being mindful NOT to break necks close the core. A broken neck essentially invalidates the whole tuber no matter how plump or promising. Lou divides with a sharp knife. For each new clump, Lou cleans his knife in a Clorox solution to disinfect it in case of virus or bacteria present in the previous variety. The divided tubers go into a 10% Clorox bath for at least 10 minutes. Instead of Captan—a very very nasty pesticide—or sulfur—a messy dust—Lou is now covering any exposed edge with Cinnamon. “It works just as well and smells a lot better.” Label with a-bottle-o-ink-in-a-pencil or soft Sharpie. Deborah and Erik write with purple pens used on human skin before operations. Lou lets his tubers dry for 24 hours and then stores them in guinea pig shavings. Other people use large-grain vermiculite. “Keep your labels with each clump!” Lou admonishes!!! Store in a dry and cool--but not freezing—spot. Lou uses his Sunset garage.

VISIONS OF SUGAR PLUMS/AWARD WINNING DAHLIAS

How will we survive the Mud Months? Palliate your Dahlia Deprivation with several doses of pouring through the on-line commercial dahlia catalogs. <https://dahliaaddict.com> comes with this warning: “those with modest urban lots may wish to exercise caution. Additional side effects may include garden budget distension and high petal counts. Dahliaaddict offers 2737 varieties of which 1300 (47%) are available from only one supplier. Of the 8985 inventory listings, already 8% are sold out! Wow. Purportedly by Thanksgiving, 30/73 suppliers are already open. Amongst other options, you can search using size/form/or color or alphabetized names. Dahliaaddict warns that if you can't find Raspberry Twinkle, Puff-N-Stuff or Aztec Gold, it's because they're under [Caproz Raz'bry Twinkle](#), [EV Puff-N-Stuff](#) and [Wyn's Aztec Gold](#). TIP: If you can't locate a variety, try Googling to see if it has a more formal or alternate

name. The reverse may be true when you go to a supplier's site.” For your delectation, Deborah has been collecting snazzy, flashy, noteworthy, exquisite dahlia pictures all season just to dole out herewith during the next 4 Mud Months. Caveat Emptor: Buyer Beware! Of course Growers extol lavish praise describing their spectacular dahlias. Use your ADS Classification book to check out which dahlias do best in their particular categories. For example, if you wanted a big yellow bruiser would you choose Kelvin Floodlight with 60 wins, Ac Jeri with 76, Inland Dynasty with 87, Wyn’s Neon Dream with 72 or Bloomquist Shine with 3? Get Smart: don’t get beguiled by enticing pix or cheap prices!!!! Talk to friends and other growers. Bob Papp recommends the Connell’s list but warns that you have to buy 5 each of any variety for the good price. Philip chanced Crazy 4 Dahlias last year. They sell small rooted cuttings through the mail. He had his best garden in years. Sue reports that Swan Island sells more than just show/competition dahlias; moreover, their tubers are excellent. Clearview Dahlias sells mostly their own introductions and they are superb. Tony purchased from Clacks, Connells, Cowlitz and Showcase. Paula reports that 9 of 11 produced well from Delightful Dahlias. It’s always fun to plant some new dahlias each season.



A LA MODE



AC KIRA



AC PETALICIOUS



ALPEN BILL



BLOOMQUIST BLUSH



CELESTE RENEE



*Clearview
Butterscotch
by SCD*

CLEARVIEW BUTTERSCOTCH



*Corallio
Furiosa
by SCD*

CORALLIO FURIOSA



*Hapet Austria
Lace by SCD*

HAPET AUSTRIA



FLAMETHROWER



CAMANO RASCAL



GITTS CRAZY



CLEARVIEW DANIEL & JESSICA

DUES DUE: Do Well By Doing Good

Our membership chair, Devorah, reminds us that it's that time of year again. Please fill out the Membership Form ([CLICK HERE](#)) again—yes, every year a new form, please—and give or mail to Devorah.

RAFFLE: Membership forms received by Dec. 31 yield **THREE** raffle tickets. Devi will bring forms to our Holiday party. You can fill them out **RIGHT** there and qualify for the 3 raffle tickets.

Membership forms received by Jan. 15 yield 2 raffle tickets.
Membership forms received by Jan. 30 yield 1 raffle ticket.
Raffle will be held at our February meeting. First prize: \$25 credit at our tuber sale; second prize: \$20; third prize: \$15.
Good luck.

Dahlia Society of California \$10 Individual \$15 Family

Monthly newsletter

Monthly Meetings

Sharing info, garden visits, tubers, tricks

Hands-on how to's at the Dahlia Dell

Invitations to 4 Bay Area dahlia competitions + mini shows

American Dahlia Society \$34 Individual \$42 Family

ADS Classification Book

4 Quarterly Bulletins

Members-only admittance to ADS website sections

Periodic blitz emails

All forms must be mailed to or hand delivered to Devi Joseph.

ALOHA DAHLIA!

Who was selling dahlias at the Keauhou Farmer's Market on the big island of Hawaii? Donna Mah. Since 1983, she and Joey Mah have farmed 4.5 acres of vegetables and flowers. Besides dahlias, Donna sells gardenias, hydrangeas, scabiosa, orchids, roses and various vegetables. Despite being surrounded by spectacular tropical blooms, local florists regard Donna's dahlias as exotic. Donna says that growing dahlias is a challenge because so many bugs and beasts love to eat



all the various parts of dahlias. Even in Hawaii, mildew plagues dahlia leaves. Deborah shared some of our newest “cocktail” remedies with Donna and passed on our website details.

DAHLIA TURKEYS? NOT!

John, Christine, Steve and Peter have volunteered long hours to meet Deborah’s goal of a dahlia bouquet for our holiday party. Before the rains, Jessica, Bloomquist Jeff, Hollyhill Black Beauty, Hollyhill Showtime, Taratahi Ruby, Porcelain, Snoho Storm, Belle of the Ball and amazing Pennhill Dark Monarchs continued to blaze



the Dell with glorious color. One PDM clocked in at 11” late in November! Wow. The Belles still rang in at over 8”—not bad. Cross your fingers for something petaled gracing our festive tables soon. BTW,

the Conservatory of Flowers now features an after dark wild light show. Check it out.



MOMENTO MORI

Corralitos Dahlias has officially closed. Kevin and Karen revolutionized the way dahlias are propagated and shipped around the world. They pioneered making cuttings to order, the use of sterile oasis wedges, and the use of clear plastic shipping containers which protected vulnerable rooted wee dahlia plants. Each year that Kevin and Karen operated Corralitos Dahlias, they experimented with better anti-virus techniques, better misting, better bottom heating,



different rooting media and of course, newer cooler dahlia varieties. We wish Karen and Kevin new adventures in their retirement from Corralitos Dahlias.

DECEMBER DECISIONS

The rains have begun. Is your plot well drained or do your tubers sit in a muddy bath? Dormant dahlias in soggy soil will ROT. So you MUST lift all your clumps. If you have lovely sandy loamy soil like the Dell, your clumps might survive the winter in the ground. I like to leave valuable cuttings from the previous year in for a second year. Some dahlianeers lift every other clump every other year; basically they only process HALF their garden each season. Lou and Pat have already lopped down to



5-6 nodes on each stem. Ideally one waits 3-4 weeks after lopping down to allow the tubers to go completely dormant. I already have a couple plants that have turned completely brown. I have 5-gallon pots over them to protect them from getting rain down the stems and into the crown, thereby rotting them. Some people twist pieces of tin foil over the exposed shoots to keep the crowns dry. Lou sometimes twisty ties plastic bags over his clumps. You can contribute nameless

tubers to our Surprise! Box. Please vow to contribute your excess tubers to our big April Sale. We could really sell more tubers this coming spring. Support your society with your excess tubers, please. I use an electric oscillating tool to divide. Wow! So much more precise and so much easier and no danger of cutting myself. Mine plugs in, so my processing area needs to be near an electrical outlet; Devorah's battery-operated oscillator needs no cord. She can wield it anywhere! Continue to add grass clippings, leaves and compost. Plant a cover crop as soon as you've pulled out your dahlias. Every weed you eliminate now prevents another 50 from germinating each time it rains.



A Dremel tool

Set up your 2020 growing spread sheet: Varieties on the left. Along the top I set up: ADS #, position in my garden, form, size, color, source, (price?) outcome. As you process your clumps, you'll know whether you'll be replanting so you can add that name to your spreadsheet. It's a great way to determine what you NEED for next year. Now when you cruise the commercial dahlia catalogs, you'll know what to be looking for.

Cook something wonderful to share with your fellow Dahlia Society of California diggers. Find or make an utterly steal-

worthy gift. In the past baskets of bulbs got “frozen.” Dividing tool kits passed through maximum depredations. Loppers and once a long shovel changed many hands. Dahlia magnets and dahlia calendars disappeared in calculated larceny. Gardening gloves and aprons did not ruffle much envy. Be creative! Be surprising! Delight us!

Yours in dirt,

Deborah

Photo credits: Demeter, Dietz, Dietz, Jansen, Kelly, Showcase Dahlias, Shulkin

Membership and Webmaster: Devorah Joseph

Snail Mail and Merriment Mistress: Patricia Hunter

