



NEXT MEETING:

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Topic: My Meeting

Time: Nov 10, 2020 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

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Meeting ID: 883 9764 3879

Passcode: 164688

One tap mobile

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We will discuss digging and storing dahlias. Erik will delight us with some vintage photos to illustrate several techniques.

Please send him your photos and questions from this month.

ehlg@yahoo.com

WINTER PROJECTS

Karen has declared a war on gophers—for next year. She has pledged to herself to make 100 gopher cages using the elegant Tinnee template. “2 down –98 More to go!” Surely this is a potential Boy/Girl Scouts fund-raising project???



HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?



wind baffles by attaching strong tarps to her upper open fence posts. Worked wonders. Kevin has been delighted with his huge Emory Pauls. Belle of the Ball just

To protect her dahlias from strong winds, Tara erected

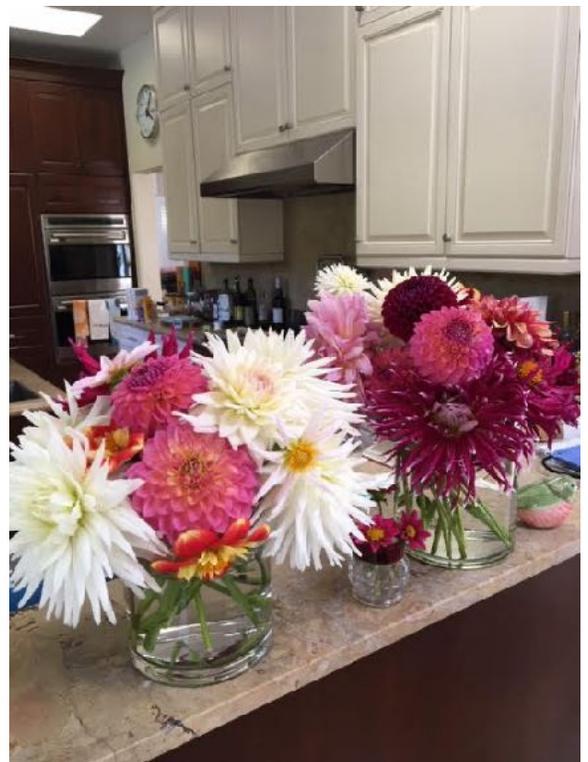




keeps blooming in Loren's raised box. In Long Beach, Bob waters his cherry tomatoes, tends orange and purple bergmanskia and continues to grow dahlias at the local VA.



The Gregorys are still clipping wonderful bouquets from their raised tin feeder boxes. Check out Stacia O's mixed floral bouquet. Anne B confesses, Here are "some of the beauties that I grow in Placerville. It is definitely a struggle to keep the plants thriving during the hot Summer months, but the "payoff" in the Fall is well worth it." Peggy M



reports, “Brookside Snowball has been the best flower for me this summer. Just Keeps blooming and all look so pristine.”

HANUMAN LANGUR ROADKILL MADE BEAUTIFUL?



Our Erik has sensitized so many people around the world to be aware of dahlias. He recently received photos from Mt. Abou, India where scientists have expanded their research from traveling gangs of Hanuman langurs to more-

easily studied road accident carcasses—amidst colorful dahlias. Who knew???



DELL DOINGS



Great to have so many volunteers at the Dell especially Sarah who rescued a whoozy Deborah, overcome by dehydration and heat. Sarah pulled the wagon and waited whilst Deborah rested in every shady spot on the route out to get into her blasting air conditioning car. Scary moments. Thanks to Tara who deadheaded a couple Wednesday mornings. Always a pleasure to have Karen’s sure



fingers on the disbudding circuit. Mui and Lisa hefted heavy 5 gallon buckets of water to underserved specimens many many days. Peggy dropped in from San





Leandro to dispense with crummy leaves and tidy up the Petting Zoo. John served lunch with so many different greens from his Twin Peaks garden including basil, sorrel, shizo and arugula. Lucy dropped by to check out the 5 notches lop down rule. Loren always bikes in on Saturday unless the fishing is good. Patricia has

been eying some of the sprouts on her lower stems as potential cuttings for the winter greenhouse. Hope they thrive. Erik delivered his final bouquets to various radiology groups. Avid photographer David surprised us during the week and captured a dahlia tattoo communing with our late season dahlias. So cool.

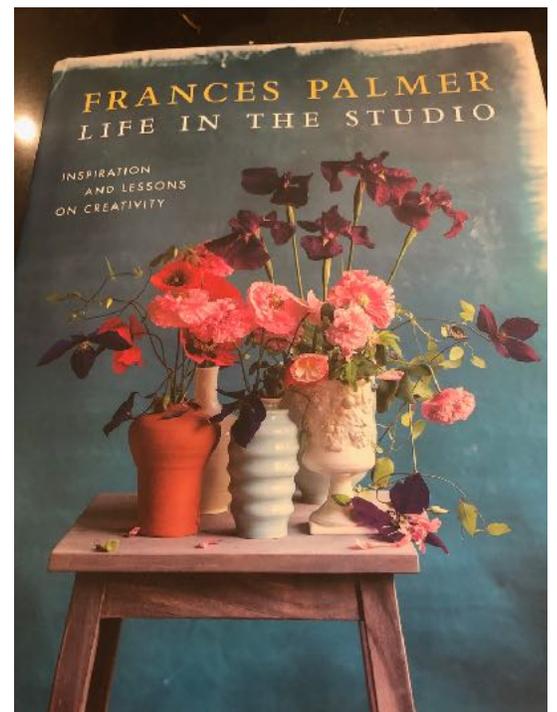


Hope he and many of you are entering the ADS National Dahlia Photo Competition. Deadline mid-November.



YOUR SCRAPS: OUR TREASURES

Tara reports on SCRAP: It's a recycling and reuse center for teachers and artists. They take your old art supplies and sell them back to the public at a very reduced price—like Salvation Army for art supplies. Always call before you go if you are donating. During Covid you need an appointment to donate. They have oodles of vases at good prices. Address: 2150 Newcomb Ave, San Francisco, CA



Phone: [\(415\) 647-1746](tel:(415)647-1746)

Website: <https://www.scrap-sf.org>

Tara also reports that Frances Palmer in her book Life in the Studio mentions our Dahlia Society of California several times as starting her on her way to growing dahlias. Palmer, a ceramicist, features her containers and arrangements.

DSC ELECTIONS

It's November and time to elect our DSC Officers and 4 Board Members. We have devised a ballot. It is a Word .doc. You can check (X) the boxes next to the candidates of your choice. When you have completed your ballot, Save As with your name, and e-mail the ballot to 20SFdahlia20@gmail.com. You will receive your ballot today by e-mail.

IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Unfortunately, the online membership renewal isn't functional yet, so we will have to ask you to print out the membership form which can be found here: [Membership Form 2021](#). We haven't decided about the usual raffle yet. If we decide we can run the raffle, all renewing members will receive raffle tickets. Remember, ADS members renewals must be in by Dec. 31st.

NOVEMBER NOSTRUMS



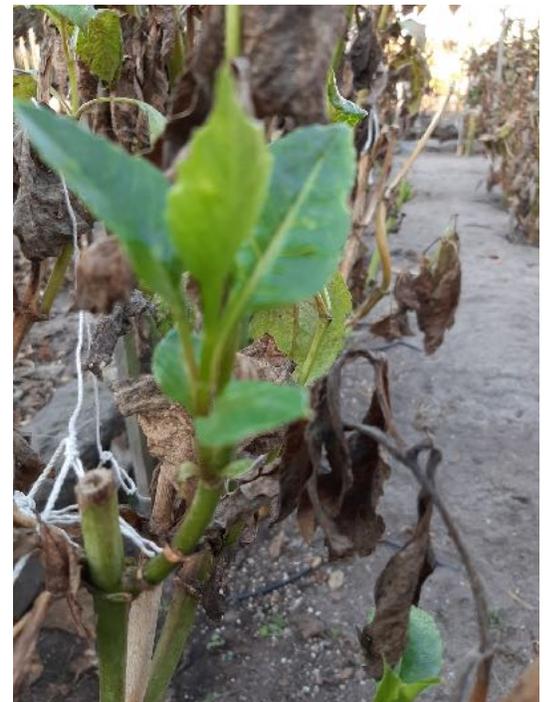
Things are beginning to wind down. Stems attenuate, centers pop sooner, seed heads form. Decide what your priorities are. Check labels one more time. Toss questionable plants. Leave some blooms on your big AA and A sized plants to develop into seed heads. When they turn hard and

tight cut them long and bring them home and pop into a glass of water. Every few days cut the bottom of the stems ¼” until they are completely brown. Hang upside down until very very dry. Separate the seeds from the chaff and store until sowing time. I choose BIG dahlias as seed donors because size seems to devolve. You might get another AA from an AA, but the likelihood of getting an AA from a ball or BB donor is soooooo slim. Up your odds for happiness and success. Get Kristine Albrecht’s book DAHLIA BREEDING from Amazon if you’re serious.

CUTTINGS: I am taking cuttings from the lower stalks of dying dahlias. In a final effort for immortality, some dahlias are responding to our warm high pressure days by sending up little green shoots either at the base or lower on their stalks. These are ideal to scrape off, pop into a light planting medium, and put under greenhouse

lights. I like to use 1”x1” bottoms and 3” high wee containers

for my sprouts. For some reason, dahlias seem to like to be “cozy” or to be able to “feel” the edges of their new home to set out roots. I remove the bottom set of leaves and keep them spritzed but not wet under 18 hours of light. (See document on taking late cuttings [here](#).)



Erik and Lou are cutting theirs down to 5 notches these days. Most people like to let 3-5 weeks go between lopping down and digging up to allow the plant to go dormant and the skins on the tubers to harden up.



In the Bay Area we almost never have a frost, meaning that we almost never HAVE to dig our clumps up. I have dug my Dell treasures as late as April because the Dell has such wonderfully well drained soil. Right now I am depositing MORE dirt to thoroughly cover my clumps. You might

add leaves to yours. My brother in Portland, Oregon dumps grass clippings over his big white AA and it survives the snowy winters there snugly sleeping in its decomposing nest.

If I planted a cutting of a B or larger new dahlia in April of 2020, I will probably let it stay in the ground for another season because sometimes cuttings produce gnarly messes instead of spiky carrot like tubers their first year. When the plant has turned completely brown, I cut it down to 5 notches. If rain threatens, I often put a 5 gallon bucket over the top. The notches are supposed to act as water seals preventing moisture from penetrating the crown and thereby rotting it. Some people make tin foil party hats; Lou often uses plastic bags as dahlia prophylactics.



HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR CLUMPS: You have choices. The easiest way is to get a cardboard box or a big pot. Put in a shovel full of soil. Rest the clump **WITH AS MUCH DIRT AS POSSIBLE** still around it on top. Add another spade full of dirt. These boxes can be stacked in a cool, dry spot until March. The tubers think they are still dormant in the ground. Nature protects them. They dream dahlia dreams. The disadvantage is



that this takes a lot of space if you have more than 10 clumps to auberge over the winter.

DIVIDING: This is an art form. Each veteran dahlia grower has his/her own techniques and tools for dividing. I love my electric Dremmel oscillating 3/8" blade. It's effortless, quick, precise, and cool. Lou cleaves to his carpet knife. Some people use huge loppers and merely hack a clump in half or in quarters. Watch some of these YouTube videos to get a feel for what you'd like to try. (If you have a couple you truly treasure, let me know and I'll try to divide them with you chez Maus Haus.) For obvious Covid reasons, we'll not enjoy a massive DIGOUT at the Dell this year. Tuber eyes are only visible within about 8 hours of disinterring or again in the Spring when the whole clump begins to germinate. So only dig up what you plan to **IMMEDIATELY** divide. Keep your labels with your divisions **AT ALL TIMES**. Clean your dividing tools between **EVERY** plant with bleach. Most of us soak our cut tubers in a 5% bleach solution for at least 10 minutes. I use sulfur on my exposed

tuber edges; Lou uses cinnamon. You will want something to prevent mold growth.

LINKS FOR DIVIDING VIDEOS; from HARRY RISETTO

[Digging, Dividing, and Storing Tubers](#)

[Putting Your Dahlias Down for a Long Winter's Nap \(a Pictorial\)](#)

[Connie's Dahlias – Splitting Tubers \(Photo Album\)](#)

[What Does a Novice Dahlia Grower Do after Frost?](#)

[No Fuss: Store Your Tubers in Plastic Wrap](#)

[Elkhart Dahlia Society Video: Digging Dahlias](#)

[YouTube Video: Digging and Dividing Dahlia Tubers](#)

[Video: How to Store Dahlia Bulbs, Happy DIY Home](#)

[Columbus Dahlia Society](#)

SPRING TUBER SALE? One way or another we WILL have a tuber/plant sale next spring. San Leandro has generously offered us their template for an on-line sale. Devorah, our brilliant web master, will make it work. However, better to be able to sell named variety tubers for \$\$\$\$ rather than unnamed orphans for mere \$.

STORAGE MEDIA: Lou uses the shavings that guinea pigs like to burrow in; Sue secretes hers in sand; Pat and I use vermiculite. My Idaho brother tosses his tubers into 5 gallon buckets with no medium at all: Idaho is so dry, mold almost never attacks his promises for the new season.

I am still arranging remarkable bouquets. Maybe they seem more exquisite because they are so much rarer now: exceptional in many ways. My Castillo Furioso has been spectacular of late; likewise Mingus Nicole. Pennhill

**Watermelon and Pennhill Dark
Monarch keep pumping out BIG
blooms. Wow.**

**Please call a few of your fellow
dahlianeers. We are all more isolated
due to Covid. Reaching out to your
gardening friends is a GOOD THING to
do for both the called and the caller.**



**Yours in dirt,
Deborah**

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Smit, Xu**

Web Master and Membership Wizard: Devorah Joseph

**Snail Mail
Benefactress: Pat
Hunter**





