



Dahlia Society
of California

Dahlia Society of California Newsletter

June 2021



NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, June 8 at 7:30.

Topic: California Dahlia Society

Time: Jun 8, 2021 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Send me pictures of your first blooms, your garden, your dahlia patch, or whatever is interesting in your garden. I'll queue them up so we can all see them on Zoom.

Dahlia.dietz@gmail.com

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82641630796>

DAHLIA EDUCATION

Here is a hot tip from Devorah:

"I subscribe to the streaming channel The Great Courses and I just found a really fabulous course, "The Science of Gardening." It is taught by a Washington State University professor, Dr. Linda Chalker-Scott, directed toward home gardeners. There are 24 half hour classes with subjects like "What Makes Soil Great", "Living Soils: Bacteria and Fungi" and "Weeding out Myths", "The Truth about Mulch", and "Plant Nutrition: Evidence-Based Fertilization".



You don't have to subscribe to The Great Courses to see it. If you have a library card, you can subscribe to Kanopy and it is available there to stream.”

DSC MEMBERS ONLY DAHLIA SALE

Erik Gaensler reports:

Wow! Not only did our valiant greenhouse magicians (Lou, Pat, Tinnee) materialize @260 4x4 plants, but several people like Tony and Ray brought more!



Our hero of the day was undoubtedly Kris Iverson with pink hat and braids. As I forgot member name-tags, Kris improvised by writing on painters tape, and her hat is correctly labelled. Kris maintains the garden for St. Marks Lutheran Church, and lives in the cylindrical Carillion

Tower next door. One of Nick's Boy Scout buddies, Mason Tuller, did the irrigation for St. Mark's garden as his Eagle project. Kris asked for some dahlias for this season which we planted together 2 weeks ago. Kris more than the returned the favor by orchestrating a perfect site for our sale. The breezy spacious outdoor venue was an ideal find terms of



"ventilation" and distancing.

Juan, the chief St Mark's custodian set aside 10 tables for us, and in turn was given dahlias for his home garden, including the red and white "Skip to My Lou" he coveted. Tara, Ron, Ray, Sue, Li and others arrived at 8:30, so by the time Tony, Tenya, Tinnee and other plant caravaners drove up, they could unload directly onto waiting tables.



Paula Jaffe, John Dale, Sue and other stalwart members organized the flats by size. The best surprise of the day was the arrival of Liebe Patterson with 200 beautifully divided tubers organized in Ace Hardware bags. These showed nice

firm eyes--look at Ivanetti! These treasures came from her beautiful Blue Dot Farm in Nicasio, we hope the site of a future field trip.

Our team was so well organized that all was in place by 9:20, ten minutes early. Pat Hunter officially gave orders to "start the shopping", and the plants began to fly off the tables. Our "MVS" - most valuable shopper - was Maggie Rothschild, who arrived with her 2 dogs and left with a \$450+ treasure trove for her Berkeley garden. Maggie's plot is next to Alta Bates Hospital where I work, and another potential field trip. Our most focused shopper was Tracy Leeds, who cornered the market for Eden Benary, named after her late mother Dalia Benary Leeds. The Warden's came by and received



accolades for their donation of Dave Zhen's masterful fence painting at the Dell.

By 10:30 we were already beginning to clean up, and by 11:15 we thanked Kris Iversen and left the site as tidy as we found it. I brought home the few leftover plants, which will

harden off in my back yard, and have some of Liebe's remaining tubers too. I had promised to help a few members who could not make the sale, and want to find every dahlia a good home. If you know of people still in the hunt, direct them



my way. I can not promise them exactly what they seek, but anything I still have is top notch and will delight them.

The St. Mark's site has nice big area for tables right in front of its stately

entrance, and many of us agree we may have found a good home for future sales. The site is very convenient for people from Marin and the East Bay. Such great parking is nowhere to be found near the County Fair Building, which continues to increase its fees.



This was the first gathering with old dahlia friends in over a year, and for me that was the highlight. This morning was a bright spot in a -challenging time, and we have much to be grateful for!

Thanks again to all,



especially Kris, Juan and St. Marks Lutheran Church!
Thank you, Erik, for such a wonderful write up.





DEADHEAD VIA INSTAGRAM

Karen S-C sent in this link from the Dahlia Man at Mendocino Gardens. He explains the importance of deadheading and how to do it. Thank you, Karen, for being on the look-out for good dahlia tips.

https://www.instagram.com/tv/CEo_4eSgubN/?igshid=ti09fxg4do27

DAHLIA DELL DOINGS

All 6 Dahlianeers have planted. Tinnee, Erik and Sue deposited all their plants in gopher cages. Herculean effort. Pat and Deborah are still planting those extra special ones they held spots for. Deborah has been putting sleeves around

some very tall skinny dahlias when planting. These can either be 1-gallon pots with the bottoms removed. Paula uses milk cartons cut to the requisite length for the same cosseting factors. These protect against too much rambunctious wind and give a little shield to too much direct sun too fast. As the plant grows up with a stronger stalk, I remove the protective sleeve. Great to see so many people come visit on Saturday mornings.



LEAF MINERS?

If you have weird trails in your leaves check out this article about Leaf Miners. <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/>



gorgeous Golden Gate Park open to cars again.

Click Here: <https://www.change.org/p/mayor-london-breed-keep-golden-gate-park-open-to-everyone-re-open-jfk-drive-459de70d-08fd-4bac-945b-8d79eb4fa5ee>

TUBERZILLA:UNEARTHING LOST DAHLIA TREASURE

Tara takes us on a great journey of discovery. Excellent pix help put you in on the action. If you'd like to comment on Tara's story: tara.donohue@corcorangl.com

See the full story here: <https://sfdahlias.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Tuber-Zilla-2-2r.pdf>

BEE HAPPY

Joining the ranks of urban Bee Keepers, Karen dons her suit to learn how to keep back yard bees happy and healthy. Pollinators forever!



TWO-STORY DAHLIA DOME

Down in SoCal, Jon erected a bigger, better, two-story dahlia dome. He imported 35 bags of manure, all rototilled to lovely consistency. His local dahlia drug dealer unloaded 35 gorgeous varieties to compliment his 15 heirloom tomatoes. Addicts enable each other..... If you want to learn more about Jon's geodesic domes: sonostarhub.com







DAHLIA DIPLOMACY

It's all whom you know. Sanziana connected our most diplomatic Erik with David McCrory, landscape designer to the stars, who conceived a garden for the Italian Embassy. Erik envisioned a dahlia emblazing the Italian flag's colors: red, green, white. What better dahlia than our Lou Paradise's Skip to My Lou, red and white with lovely green leaves. As part of the diplomatic message, Erik included a lovely power point

presentation about Lou, true son of Italy, and the story behind his hybridization. As a result, Erik and Shelly attended the official opening of the new Italian Embassy and strolled through its garden where the official flower of San Francisco symbolizes the partnerships between Italy and California.



Here's all you need to know about Lou Paradise. Click here <https://sfdahlias.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Lou-Paradise.pdf>

STRONG JUNE STARTS

By now you probably have most of your dahlias planted. If you still have a few empty holes, call Erik or me to scarf up what's left. Look at your plants carefully. Are they lush? Turgid? Straight? Raring to grow? Great! All is well. However, if you notice some leaf discoloration check out where this is happening. If it occurs just on the lower leaves, no problems. However, if you see odd streaks of yellow, you might sprinkle a little extra fertilizer with trace minerals around the base and water it in well. It could be that your plant's little roots haven't found all the nutrients they're seeking yet. If you see funny lines inside the leaves you probably have leaf miner. A little spinosad or Captain Jack's Dead Bug will help. It will NOT clear up the affected leaves, but it will prevent new ones. Do you see the edges gnawed on? Probably a caterpillar; try to pluck it off and squish it. How about holes here and there? Perhaps snails or slugs. What about downright gnawed to the stems? Grrrr! Earwigs! Sluggo Plus will daunt all these critters. The dahlia cocktail I'm plying in June includes: spinosad, liquid fertilizer and dishwashing soap all in DILUTE amounts. Optimal spraying is after a good watering in the evening.

WATER: We are in a drought. What to do? Do you keep a little bucket in the kitchen sink to catch the water as you rinse things off? I water all my deck plants from this. Do you shower with a 5 gallon bucket? Paula redistributes her shower water faithfully. Drip systems ferry water exactly where you want it so as not to waste any. Dahlias tell you when they want

water: they droop. So if it's a cold, foggy, crappy week, you may go 7-9 days without watering. If we're blessed with hot sun, maybe you'll water every 3 days. Read your dahlias' needs. Try watering early in the morning.

PINCHING, STOPPING, TOPPING: All these are words for taking off the terminal section of stem with its 2 leaves. This forces the energy that might have gone into the first bud, back to the roots, resulting in a stronger plant. It also causes your dahlia to bush out rather than reach for the stars, resulting in a wider and shorter configuration. I pinch; Lou and Pat do not. You decide for yourself.

DISBUDDING: I have been disbudding my early plants for about a month now. You will notice that your terminal bud is often surrounded by two smaller buds on each side. Most dahlia growers snap off these two extra buds to send all the energy into the main bud; it will be bigger, taller and have a longer stem than if you had let all 3 bloom. REALLY. It's hard to do the first few times because you want bunches of flowers NOW, but ultimately you will be much prouder of the single stars. You will also be amazed by how many GREAT blooms you get. Just do it. If you are hesitant or not sure, come by the Dahlia Dell on a Saturday morning between 10 and noon and we'll show you how.

DEADHEADING: Can't believe in mid-May I have to deadhead already. Elvira, Hollyhill Sweet 16 and Bloomquist Candy Corn waive in the Dell breeze. So great! The secret to proper deadheading is to cut BELOW the first set of leaves down to NEW GROWTH. This releases a hormone that tells your dahlia it did not produce seeds; it needs to try again. Thus the more you cut correctly, the more flowers you get. Again, if you are not sure, come by the Dell.

I've been delighted to see so many bees and lady bugs already. Lady bugs voraciously gobble up aphids. As your dahlias grow taller, you might consider planting some alyssum between. Alyssum attract many beneficial bugs to help keep pests in check. A margin of marigolds wards off a lot of bad bugs and looks so jaunty.

Yours in dirt,

Deborah

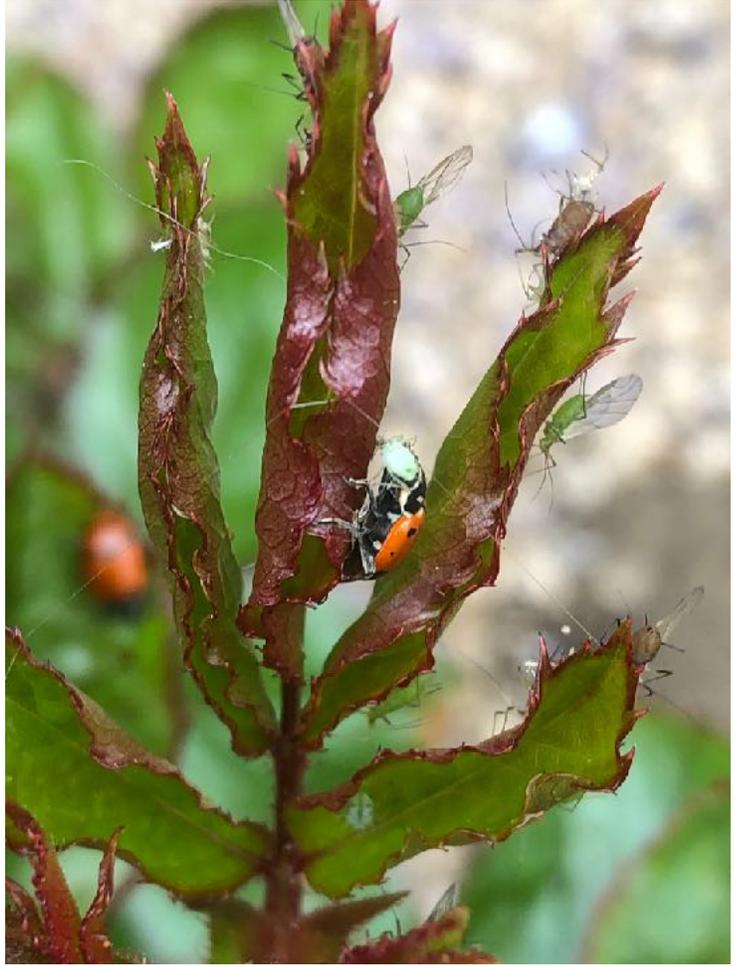


Photo credits: D. Dietz, J. Dietz, Donohue, Gaensler, Joseph, Murphy Sanchez-Correa

Layout artist and Membership maven: Deborah

Snail Mail benefactress: Pat

Here is a final look at our oh-so-successful impromptu Tuber and Plant sale seen through Peggy Murphy's camera lens.





