

Dahlia Society of California Newsletter



Dahlia Society
of California

October 2021



NEXT MEETING: Great News! Our old meeting room at 9th and Lincoln in the Hall of Flowers has been booked for Tuesday Oct. 12 at 7PM. Yay! But given that Covid is even nastier than we thought, here are a couple new rules: You MUST have proof of vaccination. A photo on your phone or a photo copy will suffice. You MUST wear a mask at all times. Because we are wearing masks, we will not have drinks nor treats at our October meeting. Program: Do bring a lovely dahlia to share with everyone. Deborah will show everyone how to make pot roots from late season cuttings. We will discuss how to build a 1-2-3-4 shelf greenhouse from a bookcase.

Just in case things turn even uglier quickly, here is the Zoom meeting link in case we have to cancel our in-person meeting.

Time: Oct 12, 2021 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Topics: How to deal with waning light, preparing clumps for good tubers, bragging

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89721560365?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89721560365?pwd=U2Y2VTU1QWttQTU1UGF1eII0ZWIXZz09)

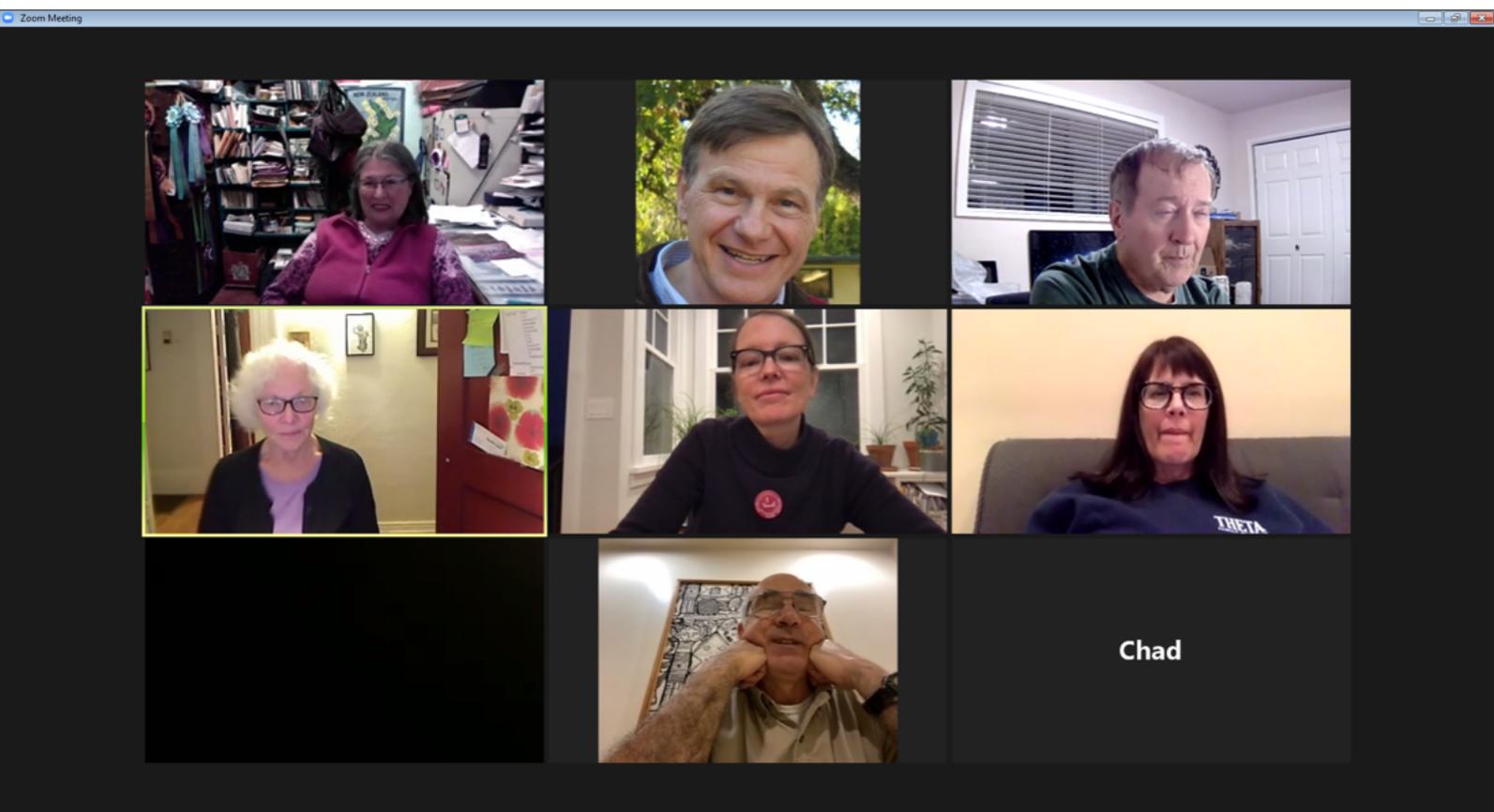
[pwd=U2Y2VTU1QWttQTU1UGF1eII0ZWIXZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89721560365?pwd=U2Y2VTU1QWttQTU1UGF1eII0ZWIXZz09)

Meeting ID: 897 2156 0365

Passcode: 423393

September Zoom Meeting:

Erik reported that 3 lucky donors have earned the right to name Lou's newest 3 dahlias. This will go a long way to off-setting next year's costs. Lou joined us and noted that he's already started making pot roots of his newer introductions, just as insurance against poor tuber production. He says he's started as many as 8 of the same variety just to make SURE he has it for the cutting bench in January. Deborah, too, has begun making cuttings from the new shoots low on her dahlia stalks. She pops her cuttings in her non-heated backyard greenhouse with 18 hours of light daily.



TO SHOW: PERCHANCE TO WIN?



Through the Herculean efforts of Curtis, San Leandro organized the **ONLY** dahlia show in the Bay Area the last weekend of August. The Garden Center at Lake Merit proved a lovely venue, using 2 large rooms and the entry hall for exhibits. By leaving all the doors everywhere open, there was air circulation—lucky for 2 hot days. John M set up a beautiful public education strip of the 21 forms with definitions in layperson’s language to describe each type. John also added an explanation of all the dots on each show table to de-mystify speckled entry forms.



Congratulations to Lou whose WH MMBA seedling won Best MicroMini Ball; his Eden Star captured Best Orchid, and his new WH FD Min nabbed Best Miniature. Lou's Mary's Jomanda, U2Ania, and Verrone's Morning Star also graced the Court of Honor. Deborah had several lovelies travel to the Head Table but only 3 stayed, beating out the challenging Novice and Open candidates: Vista Minnie, BJ's Rival and Elvira. Diana S

staggered us all with her magnificent floral interpretation of Volcano.



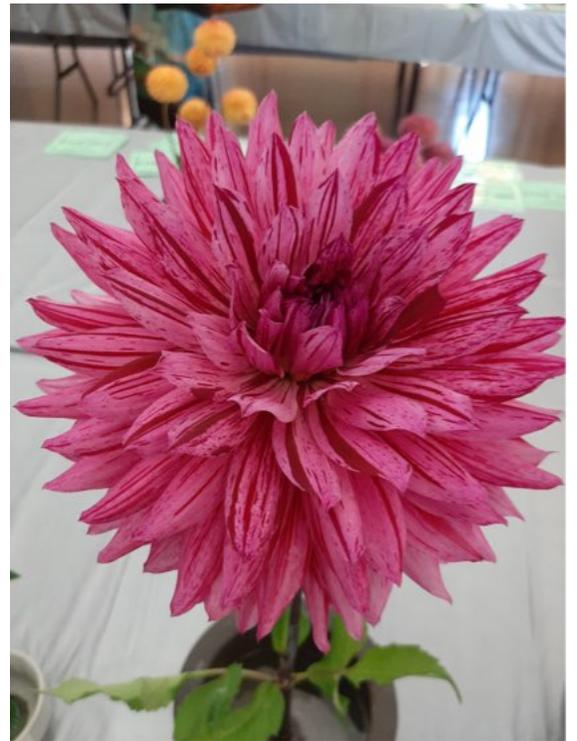


The show truly belonged to Iris—wow! Iris won almost everything else including Best Large and Best Small and Best in Show with her spectacular Elma Elizabeth. Iris also won Largest Dahlia in the World with a monstrous 14 1/2” Maki. Zowie!





Clerks, judges and exhibitors dined on Chinese food in a room surrounded by 2 glass walls looking out onto the verdant Lake Merritt Gardens, where Curtis and Chris D grow their dahlias. Again, open doors circulated air. We enjoyed being (masked) with real people and catching up on things dahlia. Sue made this garden room her headquarters as she entered all the winners into her computer and crunched out the pri\$e totals.





Most of us cruised the tables for first glimpses of NEW varieties. Deborah and Ken both showed a darling M C DB Josudi Neptune. Very cute. Iris had several wonderful purple cultivars that defied cell phone photography. Iris bred Sol Rise, a flame formal decorative. Her Salmon Kiss won Best

x5 Small. Iris secured Best Variegated with a stunning Heather. Many people await Heather J's new seedling, a fuchsia water lily.

Check out the very section.



strong novice

LUCY'S HIDEAWAY



On the upper slopes of Twin Peaks, in the shadow of Sutro Tower, grows a glorious garden that combines salvias, camellias, fuchsias, daisies and DAHLIAS. Lucy invited Deborah, Tara and Jenn to potluck lunch and a wonderful tour. Meal conversation? How to open up JFK Drive to not only dahlia caretakers but to the whole public. The Americans with Disabilities group might be the only organization with enough national juice to take on the Mayor and the Parks Alliance. Lucy grows spectacular Irish Blackhearts, Blomquist Lauras, and Red Velvets (remember when volunteers dug up a 20-year old clump back in May?). Particularly cute was Tacoma Orange Slice, 3312, BB C Fl.





GROWING GIFTS

Lou's generous donations of naming rights have helped keep our little Dahlia Society solvent in these tricky times, paying for everything from manure to blue ribbons and renting space for our



tuber sales and annual show. We get no support from the city, other than the real estate and water. Phil and Marilyn's donation paid to have the oval fence beautifully repainted. An effort is underway to rebuild the crumbling hillside. (We also need someone to help with our outdated website. Any talented volunteers?)

It takes 4 years for a dahlia to prove that it's genetically stable: it comes back each year looking EXACTLY like it looked the year before. Moreover, it must be "show-worthy." It must be able to compete against all the other similar dahlias growing for the Court of Honor in the United States. Lou, being the American Dahlia Society Classification Chairman, tallies all the winners. Armed

with deep knowledge, he severely judges his seedlings each year. Sometimes he keeps several first years just to see how they might turn out if grown again. He is tougher on his second years; third years sometimes walk the plank into the compost pile. So some years, Lou has NO new introductions. Luckily this year he offered 3 to Erik to auction off their naming rights.



Elizabeth Spokes already has a dahlia named after her. She ponied up and got first choice, naming



Eden Sophie after her daughter and Eden Joleen for her mother.

The third new hybrid, a red miniature ball, will be named Eden Monique after Monique DeVane, the wife of LWHS Chief of Development Brian Driscoll. Brian has been a regular at our



Dahlia Picnics. Brian heard Erik's Lick Wilmerding parent talk on Dahlias and asked to name a bloom after his wife Monique for her 60th. Monique heads Oakland's fantastic College Prep School.

Thank you Lou and thank you Erik and thank you to all our eponymous donors!

DAHLIA DELL DOINGS

What wonderful surprises we have had at the Dell. Not only did he come back from 10 years living in New York, but John G still had his dahlia id pin and wore it with pride!! Goldilocks no longer sports long golden tresses, but our favorite fireman, Mike B,



returned to share stories. So much fun. Mike's into pollinators. He taught Sarah all about which plants to grow to attract which butterflies. The steel cut-out artist pedaled around the recumbent trike it for a couple laps. Alliance asked to Denizens as an are helping projects. Other percentage of the DSC, we are not done for us. determined that publicity were had living art visit Check out these Everyone loved

The Carmen Garza teardrop on her and let Deborah steal So fun. The Parks feature the Dahlia example of how they neighborhood than taking a donation\$ given to sure what they have Nevertheless, Erik some positive better than none. We the real inspirations. colorful tattoos. Deborah's huge



Pennhill Watermelons, bred in South Africa. Tara wonders how big a vase she will need. When a strolling musician serenaded



the Dell, he inspired Thuy to dance with giant Watermelon pom poms. Erik and Sue's hillsides are in full spate now—absolutely magnificent. How wonderful that Steve left the Dell just in time to chauffeur Miss Patricia back home. Hillary noted that whilst we Dellians are not allowed to bring motor vehicles into the



circle, Park employees are free to drive large trucks, carts, pick ups and cars through our paradise. In fact, the Dell was so inviting that they brought truck loads of workers to the Dell to eat their lunches in our lovely surroundings.

How thoughtful of Maggie to not only pick Pat up, but when they got to the Dell, Maggie pitched in helping deadhead and disbud. At Sarah's suggestion, Craftsmanship Quarterly sent photographer Jak to document the Dell for their on-line magazine about building a world to last.





CABRILLO PLAYGROUND DAHLIA GARDEN

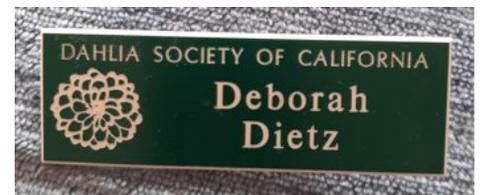


Devorah transformed a trashy section along 39th and Cabrillo from a doggie latrine to a glorious sidewalk dahlia garden. Her Belle of the Balls and KA's Peppercorns are humungous. Hollyhill Dragon Fire and Allen's Drifter shine with inner fire in her mostly overcast area. Devorah's beautifully labeled blooms attract neighbors and dahlia pilgrims from all over. Check out Devorah's stunning dahlias because it's probably the last year in this location. Devi is particularly proud of her big pink Clearview Carol Marie and even bigger orangey blend, Lexa.



DSC ID BADGES

Our lovely Patricia has offered to order id pins for those DSC members interested. Please send her an email or letter with your name spelled legibly and correctly. dahliasocietyggp@gmail.com



URGENT! EMAIL YOUR OPINION NOW

“Golden Gate Park Access and Safety Program, is a joint effort of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department (RPD) and

San Francisco Municipal Transportation Transit Agency (SFMTA), tasked with finding solutions that balance the need for safe, car-free spaces with the need for access to Golden Gate Park for all visitors, including seniors and the disability community.

San Francisco Recreation and Park Department | City & County of San Francisco.”

Basically we are given 1 week to mount a campaign to re-open Golden Gate Park to private cars. The bicycle coalition is



STRONG and will get ALL its members to chime in about how great the car-free GG Park is. The people conducting this survey are the ones who like farmers markets and slow SF streets. Please let them know what YOU think. Please get your friends, neighbors, relatives—even frenemies— remind them that the public has VOTED down such a measure in the past and would again if put in a referendum. Write, email, phone. Save the Dell! Four of the six people who presently grow at the Dell will probably not return unless they can drive in. The trek, wagon pulling, and logistics presently are too onerous. Please, email, write or phone!

McLaren Lodge in Golden Gate Park | 501 Stanyan Street | San Francisco, CA | 94117

Phone: (415) 831-6884 Email: recparkvolunteer@sfgov.org

YOU ARE INVITED!



**BLOOM
TOWN**



Join us for a neighborhood celebration full of music, flowers and community fun!

**Allyne Park
Friday, October 1
4 to 6PM**

Bloomtown is a multi-layered, interactive public art installation taking place along the Cow Hollow commercial corridor through mid-November.



ALREADY OCTOBER?

As the light begins to wane, your stems will attenuate; your blooms may be smaller, and some even begin with popped centers. Do NOT worry. Your dahlias did not go bad suddenly—they are just trying to cope with less light hours of the day. This is your last chance to ROGUE. If you have 2 clumps of the same

cultivar, note which is better. That's the one you want cuttings and tubers from. Toss anything you would not want to share with your DSC tuber sale in the spring. Certify your labels; make sure the names are correct.

CUTTINGS AND POT ROOTS: Take some cuttings and make some pot roots. Late season cuttings are usually taken lower on the stalk. I like at least 3-4 sets of leaves. I remove all but 2 sets. I use a perlite/soil mix which makes it easy for the wee roots to



flourish. I pop the cuttings in 1x1x3" cutting containers; when



these fill with roots and I see the roots spilling through the bottom, I move them to 4x4's. Lou puts his cuttings directly into 4x4's; but Lou has access to a heated greenhouse with misting rooms. Mine take 4-6 weeks to establish roots in my unheated greenhouse with 18 hours of light per day. I spritz but I don't water. By using the heated misting room, Lou and his crew's cuttings root in 3-4 weeks.



DOUBLE DISBUD: if you want to maximize the size of your autumnal blossoms, not only disbud the original layer, but go down to the next set of leaves and take those two buds out as well. Now is the time to severely cut down to new growth. This may result in your plant pushing out a bunch of wee sproutletts that you can turn into cuttings.

DO YOU WANT TO COLLECT SEEDS? You may notice that Lou has stopped deadheading at the Dell. This is because Lou wants his dahlias to start making seeds. The petals will drop off the bloom and the remaining head will expand. If it gets fairly solid, it probably is full of seeds. Ideally, let it turn brown on its stem. I cut my big seed heads and hang them upside down at home until they dry out. Then you can harvest seed anytime in Dec/Jan/February.



STOP FERTILIZING! As of the last day in September no more fertilizing, not even in your dahlia cocktail. Old dahlia hands claim that late season fertilizer results in poorer tuber storage.

CUT BACK ON WATERING: as your plants slow down, so should your watering. As long as your dahlias are turgid, **DO NOT WATER.** When they start to slightly wilt, then water them again. You will go longer and longer periods between watering from now until full dormancy.

Last chance to invite people over to see your beautiful dahlias.

Yours in dirt,
Deborah

Photo credits: Brown, Dibner, Dietz, Gaensler, Joseph, Murphy, Rothschild, Shawaf, Smith, Wallace, Whitfield



Distribution: Devorah

Snail Mail benefactress: Patricia

