

Dahlia Society of California Newsletter



DAHLIA SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA OCTOBER

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, October 11th at 7:30 @ 9th and Lincoln.

Program: The LAST NOVICE only mini show of the year. Last chance for your late beauties to strut their stuff. Prize\$: \$1.50 for Blue; \$1 for red; and 50 cents for third. Go for it! Please be prepared with exhibitor cards and correct ADS numbers. Like last month, all categories and x3 and x5. Please limit yourself to 2 entries per category. Try teaming up with a more show-seasoned veteran for help (make arrangements BEFORE our meeting). (Please reach out to our more senior growers! This is good for you and good for our sense of community.) We'll open at 6:45 and hope that all exhibits will be in place by 7:30. We'll also discuss late season goals and care and "putting the crop to bed."

**PHENOMENAL! SEPTEMBER
NOVICE-ONLY MINI SHOW!**





**Wow!
What a
glorious
show!
Almost
200
blooms!
Zowie!
Julie**



displayed a heart-stopping My Hero. Veteran exhibitors showed newbies how numbers for their Alice came down from menacing Kenora Gordy LeRoux's Afterwards, Katy much! My garden was and so everything was I was so impressed by all of mine looked



to find ADS 4-digit entry forms. Katy and Mill Valley with 7 Macop B's (named for cancer meds). noted, "I learned so super early this year end of season stuff.... the level of perfection, great

until I got them there stems weren't straight, leaves weren't good, etc. Really opened my eyes to how much time and space go into a winning bloom!



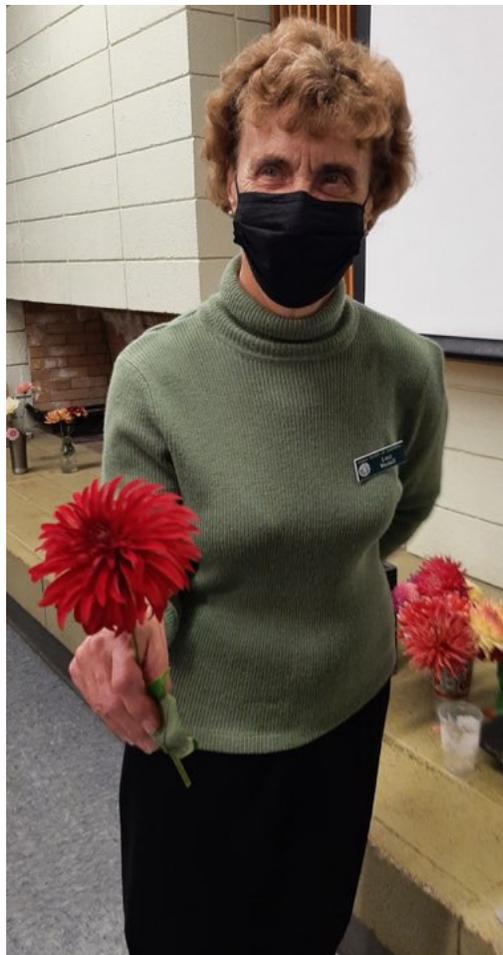
And being prepared...if you have the right vessels and fill out paperwork ahead of time, half the rush could be taken care of. What a fun night!” Katey’s beautiful Mars nailed blue



—right on time. Chad brought a box of blooms from Davis and Alice transported hers up from Atherton. Wolfe Lane Kevin’s basket yielded 5 blues including a stunning Irish Glow pom. In the winners’ parade stood some dubious choices. “If your dahlia has its first two leaves and a good center, bring it; let the judge make the judgements” recommended Deborah. A couple categories had only 2 entries and there were no mignon singles, orchids or orquettes at all. However, there were 14 B’s and a whopping 15 BB’s. An Alberta Sunset earned blue for Tim. Eight growers assayed getting three of the same variety in a single vase. It proved harder than it looks. Usually there’s one up and two down; or two up and one down; occasionally someone stages 3 in a row. Ideally all the centers look the same direction into the judges’



admiring
 triumphed with 3
 Three people
 vase with Kauna's x5
 prevailing. Practice
 It's definitely trickier
 Ultimately, Patricia's
 Hollyhill Electra
 In Show. Sarah and
 capturing the crazy
 Zoom watchers.
 her own competition
 peninsula and
 moment to assess



assessment. Peggy
 lovely Just Peachy.
 managed 5 in one
 Eden Benares
 staging at home.
 than you'd think.
 magnificent
 succeeded as Best
 Laura tried
 energy with our
 Young Abby set up
 at home down the
 Deborah took a
 her entries.



SPACE-CHALLENGED INGENUITY



San Francisco lots are rarely large; sunlight is limited by SF's custom of building homes wall-to-wall. But Tara not only found room for 30 dahlias but also for a greenhouse and a



trampoline! Wow! Climbing down 3 stories of spiral stairs overlooking the whole City, we stop at her little enclosure for rooting cuttings which

gets plenty of afternoon sun. Another level down, and we spot dahlias. After a couple years of experimentation, Tara grows in large containers which she can shift around as the sun's angle changes. To



isolate a problematic clump, Tara found a zip-up detention tent. Judicious dahlia cocktails yield her plump green leaves and excellent stems. Tara also grows a few in a sun-blessed corner off her green “lawn.” We plotted which to keep, which to toss and which to share next season. I want to try her Hollyhill Starburst—it blazed a path in her garden.

SAN FRANCISCO'S FABULOUS FLORIBUNDA!!!

DSC really pulled together to stage a wonderful show! More press, more volunteers, more exhibitors, more visitors, more



winners, more prize \$, more sizzle in the air! The magic started weeks before August 19, with Jenna, Laura and Deborah scoring some great publicity. Jenna hung Tinnee's posters in so many businesses near our Hall of Flowers. Laura plastered net media and nailed some radio spots. Deborah enticed several



Bay Area What to Do 'zines including Axis and Johnny Fun and Cheap, which featured our show and Dell myriad times. Sarah hung posters around the Dell.

SET UP

Armed with the floor plan, Lou supervised setting up hundreds of heavy tables throughout the Galleria. Thank you to everyone who pitched in, including donating your spouses and strapping strong children. Joe and Tony taped white tablecloths. Gino and John attacked the near tables and Maggie and Don tackled the far reaches. Tinnee



astounded us when she drove in with all the (heavy!) white screens which she had carried upstairs and loaded into her wee Prius by herself!!!

STAGING

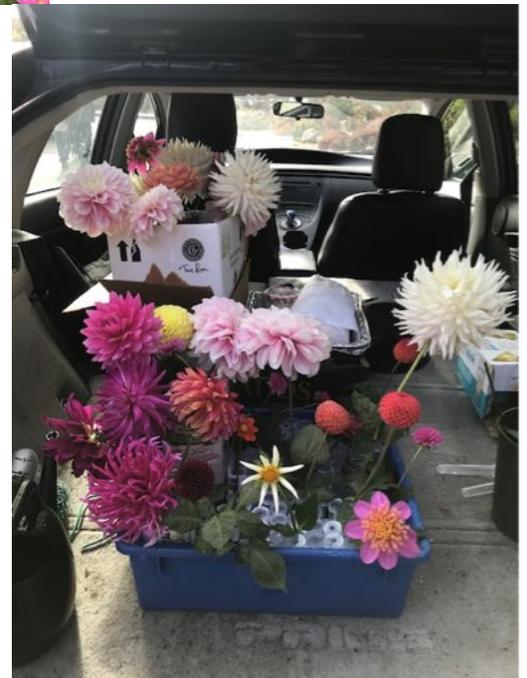
Our diplomat, Erik, brokered a deal with Park Rangers for morning and evening (armed) escorts for our Dellians. It felt so novel to have our automobiles along side the Dell fence for the first time in 3 years. Check out



how Lou, Deborah, and Sarah laid out their dahlia mobiles. By 8:30 PM almost all the set up tables held industrious growers staging magnificent blooms. Around 10 PM a family walked in from the dark, straight to



Deborah. Our last simulcast zoom excited their young daughter, Abby, to



enter. What a great family for supporting her, all driving up late at night with her entry form all filled out. All night long more exhibitors arrived. Several DCSers pitched in to “run” entries to the designated spots for time-pressed growers approaching 9 AM deadlines. Several new clerks and candidate judges evaluated



over a thousand dahlias.

JUDGING

As the judges adjudicated blue, green and orange dots, Jenna



constructed not one but two amazing photo op stops outside where casual passersby would be attracted to the glorious dahlia siren songs. Laura suggested Instagram hashtags (#) and provided a great QR square. Greeting our guests,



our outstanding Membership Table Salespersons urged the public to vote for People's Choice (won by Kristine A with a lovely white centered purple on the outer petals FD after two exhibitors inadvertently both put up stunning Ketchup and Mustards which divided the votes). Our Membership Table signed up many new members, so if you see a stranger at our meeting, please introduce yourself. We'd like to cultivate these curious new people. Roving ambassadors including Steve, Tony and





Paula walked amongst the crowds explaining why some entries had more dots than

others. One photographer brought a diminutive assistant to hold a black velvet cloth up as background. Thus we met John Erve, who designed “I left my dahlias in San Francisco” T-shirts, dahlia tiles and a 2023 Dahlia Dell Calendar. He probably shot winning pix for the ADS Photography Contest. Special Kudos went to Tinnee, Guy and Chad for being the hardest working Wonder Team; they took on THREE different categories of judging challenges including our photography exhibit. Congratulations to Julie L for sweeping the Pix!





ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Thank you to Rachel Perls for staging her hyper-realistic dahlia paintings at our show. As Rachel worked on one of her canvases, she answered the public's #1 question: how long does it take to create a single painting? Typically, Rachael spends 2-3 months working on each, painting from her own photographs. When not executing humongous dahlias, Rachael runs Hue Consulting, an architectural color consulting business. Look for Rachel at the Noe Valley Art Festival Sunday Oct. 2nd, 10-4; and SF Open Studios, Nov. 5-6th, 11-6 PM @ 111 Minna Gallery in SOMA.



AWARDS\$

After a long day judging, Iris's gorgeous KA's Papa John won Best

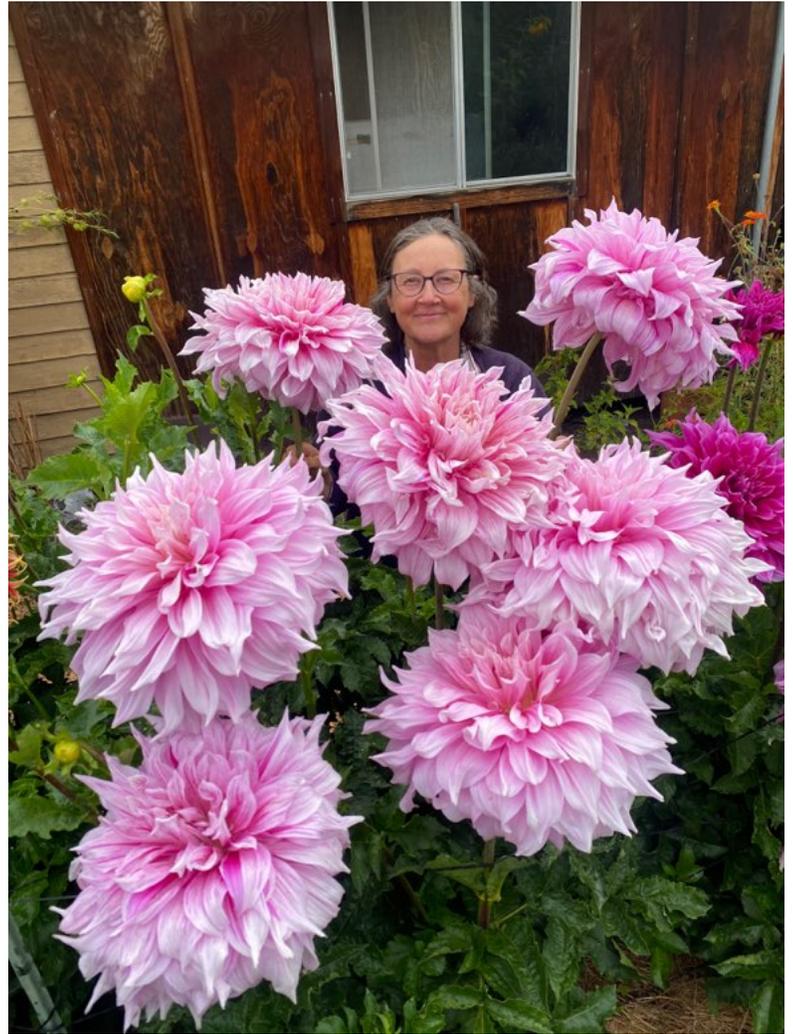


Large; Becky's dainty nabbed Best Open Deborah's little Irish Best Small to Best in Irish Glow was ideal of what a pom mathematically victory, Pat proudly Small Pink Hilltop Kempers beat



19 Pollen Annie Centered; and Glow ascended from Show. While tiny, her almost the platonic should be: perfect. Thrilled with displayed her Best x5 Embrace. Erik's x5 out his exquisite x5

Clearview Lilas for Best x5 Large. Iris's massive 15" Emory Paul astounded the public; but look what she had to choose from at home! Steve and



Judi S from San Louis Obispo continued their swath of Novice Sweepstakes; Lou P amassed the points for Amateur Sweeps; and Deborah was stunned to learn she garnered enough wins for Open



Sweepstakes. Congratulations to Chad and Sonia for triumphing in two of the arrangement categories. Brave and artistic. Whew! Soraya T took took a blue ribbon for her fine Eden Elizabeth. On Sunday the family from Friday night returned. “Miss Deborah, one of my dahlias is gone!” our youngest exhibitor protested upon walking over to the Junior section. “Let’s check one more spot,” Deborah suggested, walking her over to the Court of Honor. Abby spotted her dahlia, and spotted her name

and then spotted her huge rosette with Best Junior Dahlia in Show. What a way to start her dahlia career!



Kristie and Ginger without whom: no awards!

NEW AND COOL



As always, the cognoscenti headed straight to the seedling table. Congratulations to Kristine A, Lou, the Mortons and Becky for such great new



possibilities. Whitfield's second year Flame



caught a lot of attention. Kauna's Blomquist Tory, reminiscent of 20th Avenue Memory, quietly pleased with delicate pink blush. Iris



staged an exquisite Belred Desire, pink not red. Julie's Jowey Mirella, 6007, smacked a red lipstick

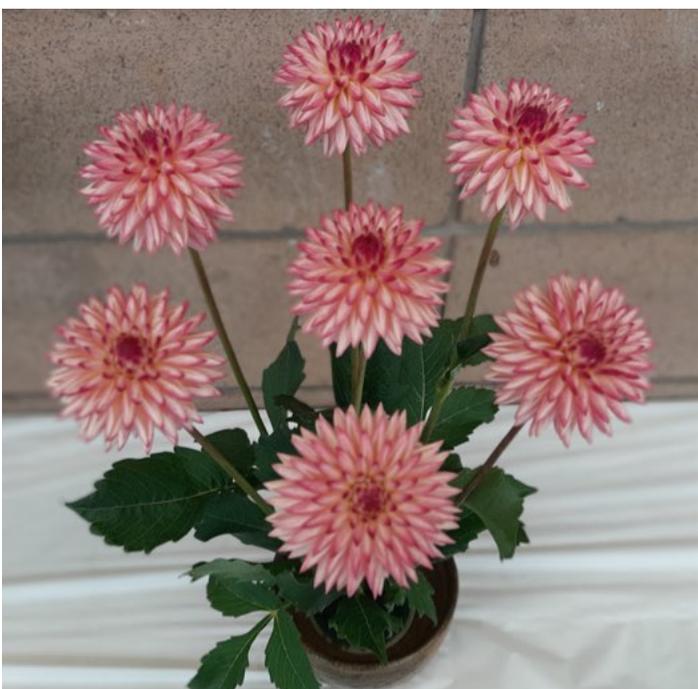
kiss! Shimmering in symmetry, Louise's Angel Rowen pleased the collonette crowd. Chris D's phenomenal Allen's Purple Rain, 2509, raged up a purple lacinated storm. Lastly, the Sodnerstrom's big Fairway Spur, 0011, pleased a lot of people; it's clones continued marching across Head Tables all over the Pacific Northwest.



NOT TO BE OVERLOOKED



Recently released, Eden Sofie's pink petals are outlined in



deep magenta. Deborah's Blomquist Vivian R smoldered like something from Game of Thrones: royal and blue blooded. In one of the show's tour de forces, Kristine staged 7 (!) matching Valley Porcupines, wonderful novelties with petals like

barleycorns. Finally, Erik staged a winning x5 of Clearview Lilas, 7008: pink and white light blended stellars.





JOY AND FRIENDS

Our first show in 3 years brought in many old friends. Mike and Martha, up from Half Moon Bay, reported they're out of the dahlia biz. Lou brought his daughter who won many Junior ribbons in eras past. Wow! Graduated and working in SF. Lou changed our society in two important ways. His scientific mind balked at the awkward 3-digit ADS numbering system where Cactus and incurved cacti had the same # but one added IC. He and Lou P

hammered out the 4-digit system used throughout the entire country now. Secondly, Lou began experimentation with propagating late-season cuttings. Before Lou, our Tuber Sales were indeed, TUBER sales; because of Lou, the largest percentage of sale \$ now comes from rooted cuttings. Roy, wonderful beyond his 90+ years, told stories. Several spouses, rarely sighted otherwise, made guest appearances.



DENOUEMENT



Sunday, Lou gave a judging mini-seminar after we feted Pat's Happy

Birthday. Jenna collected buckets of the best after-show blooms to be



taken to the Laguna Honda nursing home. After the awards ceremony and check\$, breakdown



commenced. Teams collected containers, emptied water, dried pots, and repacked them for another show. Our roustabouts stripped the tablecloths, raked and stacked the tables as they emptied. The willingness to help in any way and happy energy swirled. With 15 minutes to spare, Erik and Jen swept out the empty Galleria leaving only glorious memories.

ADS PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

Anyone—even non-members—can enter the ADS Photography Contest. You can enter up to 4 pictures in each of 10 different categories. You can enter online! Go to the ADS website, dahlia.org, read the rules, and label your photos accordingly. We had 3 DSC winners last year. Let's hope for more this year!! Take a bunch of pix NOW before it's too late.

GALA GARDEN PARTY



What a way to introduce her dahlia mentee to a bouquet of SF Dahlianeers! Paula threw a luncheon . Karen drove Deborah, Steve and Lucy to team up with Jenna, Debby and Jenn T. We all met Katy, who grows in a public garden in Mill Valley. Katy says her Kenora Macop B's are outstanding this year. Paula led a tour of her 3/4 acre hillside planting. She used contorted succulents to bedazzle as undersea





fantasy; the twisted crenelated cacti and bleeding aloes really carried her theme. Paula's Moon Garden shimmered with white, pale white, and ghostly white plants with 2 hung moons. Several apple, persimmon, fig, pear, and pomegranate trees promised fabulous harvest soon. Award winning roses complete with horticultural labels abounded. And her magnificent dahlias! Wow! A thriving bush of radiant Blomquist Jeans; smashing Rolfs; a much coveted Salish Twilight; Blomquist Dr. Ricks

and a whole section devoted to BALLS. Paula explained that due to clay/rocky soil and malevolent gophers, all her ground level dahlias are planted in 4 gallon pots with extra holes zapped in their



sides. She fills these with her special compost-enhanced potting soil and super fertilizer. When asked, she explained that she puts copper rings around all the sprouting clumps in the spring to thwart snails and slugs; she's re-used them for years. "Costly at first, but they last forever." Paula also grows dahlias in two huge raised beds near her greenhouse. No wonder Paula's garden has been featured in magazines and fancy garden tours (like our own National Show Tour in 2014).



VOTE YES ON I; NO ON J

Prop. I includes everyone, cars, bikes, rollerblades and handicapped; Prop. J has no compromise: no cars 24/7. Please

Vote in November. If you want to volunteer: <https://www.access4allsf.com/join>.

CONSERVATORY TOUR

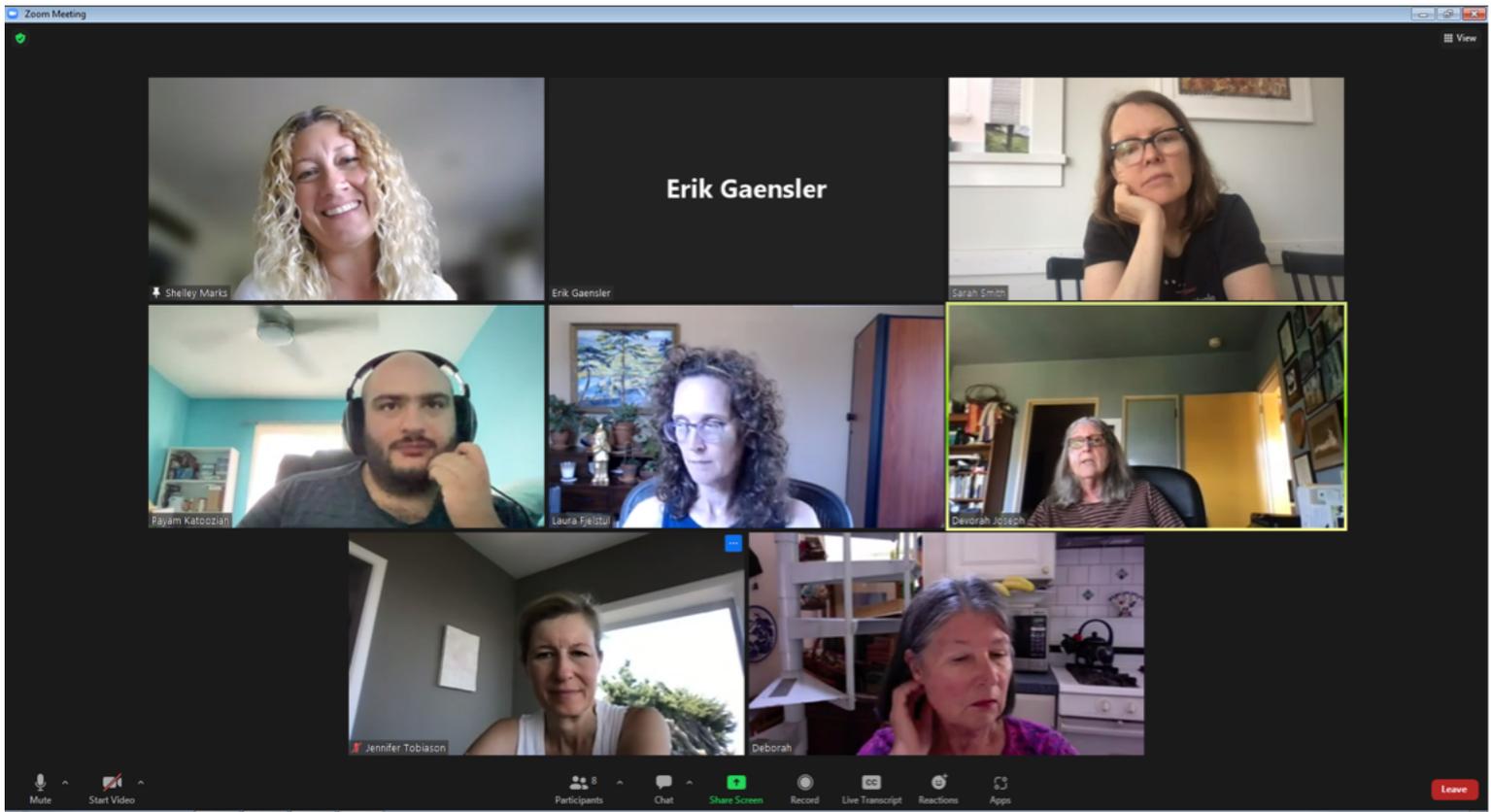
Deborah traded a tour for a tour. She gave the Conservatory staff and volunteers a Dahlia Dell tour. In exchange, Sarah will give DSCers a Conservatory tour September 29th at 1PM. Please show up a little early and wear a mask. (note this date has been changed so check your calendars)



NEW WEBMASTER

Devorah zoomed with Payam and other board members to discuss turning over the reins. This month will be a dual effort, with Devorah showing Payam how to convert Deborah's text into an indexable





archive; how to post October for a url but not yet make it available to the public, and to look over the possibility of setting up a tuber sale sign-up on line. Cross your petals for DSC!

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?



Sarah could tell from the gigantic buds that her Emory Paul promised to be BIG! But so big??? Wow! Louise reports that she gets bouquets almost every day in September. Kevin rushed between storms to tie up his tiers of tall dahlias—just in time! Since the beginning of September he brings his

bride 20-30 blooms each trip to the Bernal garden.



IF YOU OFFER, THEY WILL COME!

When Erik saw all the publicity for a rose garden tour, he determined that our World Famous Dahlia Dell should also host a public tour. Best laid plans of mice and men..... Laura provided excellent media coverage. Jenna posted great signs around the Dell fence. On the Saturday of the tour, Deborah had grave misgivings. By 7:30 AM, all the





Nancy Pelosi parking spaces had been interdicted for a public viewing of the US Open Tennis Finals. A huge screen was erected; several concession stands plied goodies; 50 picnic tables

awaited crowds; and the entire grass hillside was cordoned off. Coming in from the Conservatory side, Erik carried a couple tables down the long stairs. Jenna set up a Tuber Sale sign-up



sheet and
Joe readied
his credit
card square
to accept
new



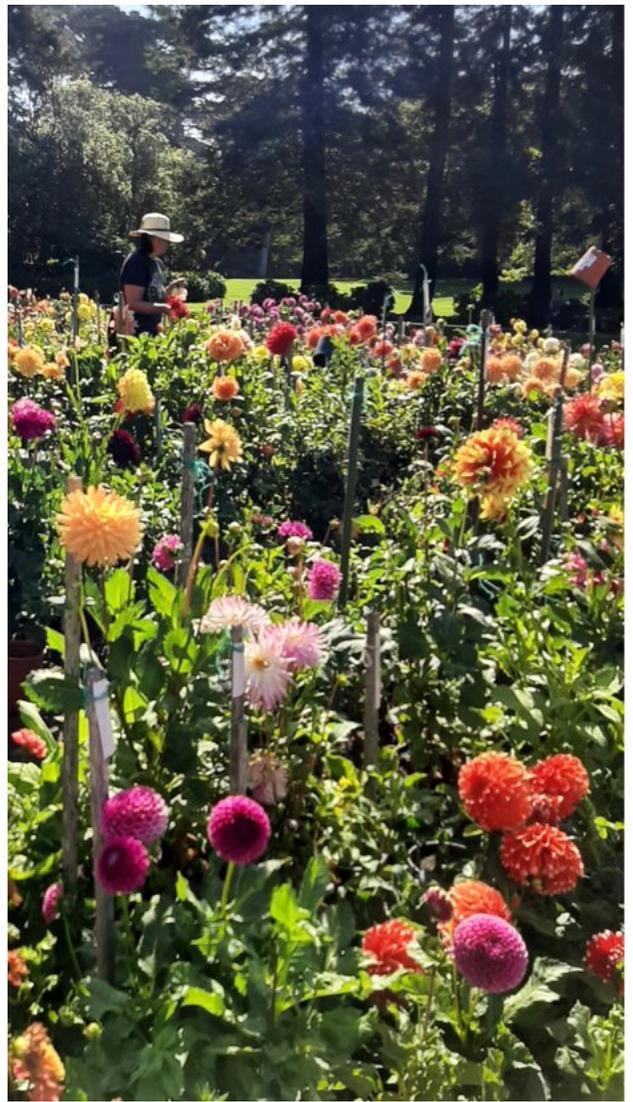
memberships. But would people be able to actually get to the Dell? YES! So many people came that Erik divided his group and Deborah took a second contingent to the Hillside for dirt wisdom. For over an hour, the crowds asked questions and waxed excited about our lovely collection of 700 pedigreed, competition dahlias! Maybe next year we need to have 2 tour days?

DELL DOINGS

Besides lots of public tours, the full spate of bloom has lured many visitors. One day Steve took on a young apprentice of about



8. Whilst her sisters careened around the Dell on bikes, she accompanied Steve filling water buckets, watering pots, putting salvageable deadheads in the wagon, all amidst quite the palaver. A little later her dad returned with a six-pack of beautiful eggs from their nearby chickens, his way of thanking Steve for such attentive response to all her questions. So very thoughtful! Brigid baked redolent ginger cookies for the



Wednesday crew. Mitzi brought more of Erde's calendars and sushi. Domo! The Hillside suffered during the heat waves, more so because the drip system endured problems. Tinnee





painstakingly went over every emitter, unclogging and replacing several. Erik flooded for good measure. A trio of neon windbreakers pedaled up to the Dell adorned with red dahlias in their helmets; their memorial ride honored their lost friend who loved our Dell.

LONG LOOK INTO OCTOBER

What the horrible heat wave didn't destroy, the waning light may lull into dormancy. Our 94+ weather terrorized our Dell. Despite repeated waterings, many leaves just crisped away. Horrible. Everything in my greenhouse succumbed and crumpled to ashes. In the Dell, we deadheaded quite



aggressively to new and strong growth and are enjoying another flush of smaller, but still beautiful blooms. Keep your clumps disbudded and deadhead with a heavy hand and you could have Halloween or even Thanksgiving dahlias.

WATER

Except for heat waves, dahlias usually need less water this time of year. Let them ask you for water by slightly wilting. Depending on weather, I may go as long as 10 days to 2 weeks without water now.

LATE SEASON CUTTINGS

Are you seeing little spriglets trying to grow on the lower stalks of your dahlias? These make wonderful late season cuttings. I wait until these new additions have 3-4 sets of leaves before I gently with my fingers, detach the whole sprout from the stalk. It should come away easily with the meristem(growing node) thick and intact. I do not use rooting compound, but many people do. I pop these deeply into 1x1x3” containers, label and thoroughly water. In my heatless backyard greenhouse without heating beds, these take 3-5 weeks to root. My lights are set for 18 hours a day. I spritz with water, extremely diluted fertilizer, and a little Vitamin B.

BAR IS CLOSED

The last call for dahlia cocktail clanged the end of September. Now we just want our lovelies to make strong tubers. They do not need anything else except the occasional water and Stylet Oil for powdery mildew. **NOTHING ELSE.** Your dahlias can read the change of season and they know how to begin their next stage. Steve observed how thrilled I was with Phil’s electric sprayer and ordered me one. Wow! Instead of an exhausting 2 1/2 hours of pumping and spraying covered in sweat, I breezed through the garden electrically in a mere 45 minutes!

This could make the dahlia person in your life a special holiday gift.....

BROWN STALKS?

When your bush has turned completely brown and no little green sprouts trying for one last triumph, cut down to 5 nodes or joints. These joints act as water seals to prevent water (if we ever get rain again!) from running down the center and into the root mass's crown—which would rot the whole thing. Some people cover these stalks with plastic bags and twisty ties or with aluminum foil. If you only have a few stalks, you might cover the whole clump with a 5-gallon tub and put a decorative potted plant on top. Make sure there are labels attached!!! Obviously, **NO WATERING!!!** Once your dahlia has gone dormant, its tubers cannot take in and process water. Water would turn your clump to mush. Most people wait 3-5 weeks before digging up the clumps to let the tubers' skin harden. Here in the Bay Area, well drained soil will allow you to dig any time from January through April.

GARDEN VISITS

Last chance to go visit other grower's gardens. Just saying.....



**Yours in dirt,
Deborah**

**Photo credits: Dibner, Dietz, Donahue, Fjelstul, Gaensler,
Hendrickson, Kaiser, Smith, Wallace, Whitfield**

Webmaster: Devorah

When a nurse takes up gardening



Snail Mail Benefactress: Patricia

Membership: Debby







