



Dahlia Society of California Newsletter



NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, September 12 at 7:30 at 9th and Lincoln. Program: Novice Only Mini Show. Ca\$h prize\$. You may come as early as 6:30 to begin setting up your exhibits. Please have entry cards with ADS numbers. Here's another chance to educate and dazzle us all about your blooming beauties. **All entries should be on the show table by 7:30.** Remember: first two sets of leaves, no popped centers, disbudded, leaves over the edge of container. We will reevaluate what went well at our Floribunda! show and make a list of ways we could make 2024 even better. We'll also talk about how to extend our dahlia bloom through Halloween and even squeak out a few for the Thanksgiving table. Deborah will bring some pix from the Portland National Dahlia Show. Who will bring comestibles to share with your fellow growers?

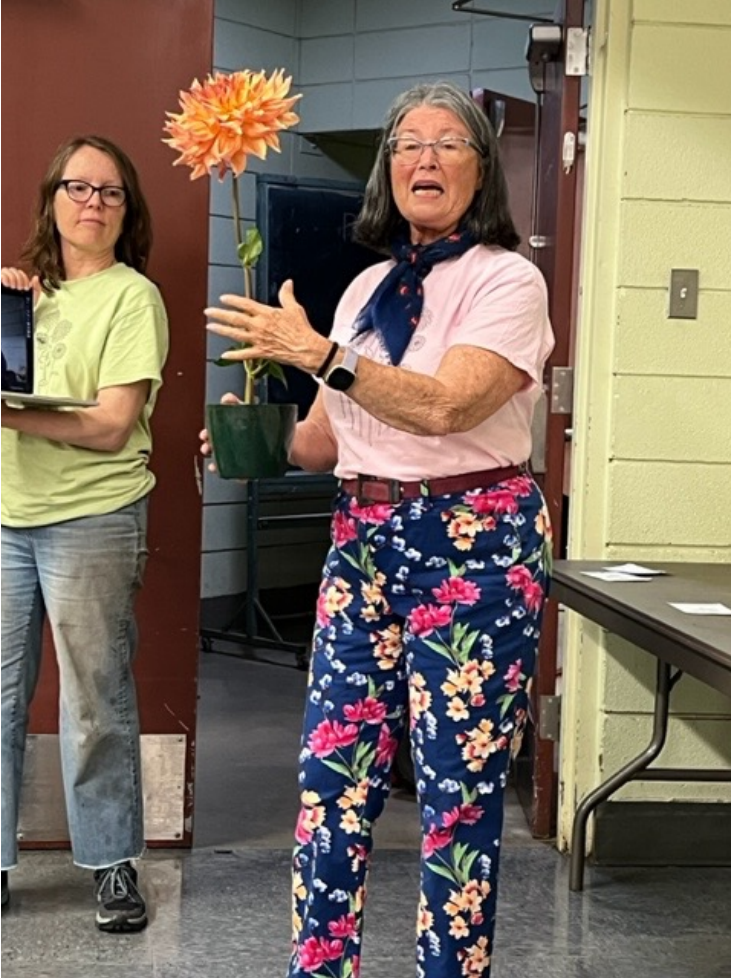
NOVICE ONLY MINI SHOW

Congratulations to all who braved the first NOMS.

Special thanks to Tony who judged—no easy task!

Twelve participants filled almost every category, although





there were a few blue ribbons to solitary entrants, most categories vied with real



competition. Katy's dark Diva caused ripples; the Ko's lovely L.A.T.E. nabbed Best MiniBall. Peggy's x3 huge AA AC Bens nudged out Kauna's x3 dainty Sir Richards. Wrangling 3 or (gasp!) 5 into one vase really challenges.



Congratulations to Patricia for her stunning stellar, Dancin' Queen. You are both BEST IN SHOW. Joe joyfully doled out the ca\$h.

DAHIA FESTOONED CABLE CARS?



On August 2, our official city flower turned up in force to help celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Cable Cars. The festivities took place at the Powell & Market street turnaround, which is flanked to the east by San Francisco's Flood Building. Karin Flood has taken over the management of

this iconic structure, and wanted a floral display at the turnaround similar to what was seen in paintings from the 19th century.



Karin and her sisters Lisa and Christina planned a dahlia theme. The DSC's own Jenna Kaiser worked nearly continuously for two days to produce a vintage flower stand and dahlia garlands to decorate a cable car. Jenna also made corsages for VIPs, pinning them on both Nancy Pelosi and Willie Brown. Jenna obtained buckets of Cornel and Cornel bronze at the Flower mart, but



needed flowers with more pizzaz and poms for corsages. All the Dell Team immediately volunteered their blooms. The Nob Hill Gazette for August features Cable Cars and Dahlias on its cover in anticipation of this historic moment. They even included a dahlia quiz with a \$100 prize! Thanks to Erik for sharing photos of the gala event on our big and small screens.

Delicious thanks to Tony and Ens for their yummy pastries and to Katy for the cookies. Maggie, those See's Candies were sooo decadent. Thank

you to John and Annette for the fudge cookies and crunchy toffee bars. MMMM. How healthy to have home grown pears from Ken and Kathy. When we all contribute something—ideas, blooms, slides and yummys—our community is happier and stronger.

PORTLAND DAHLIA CHAT

As he does every month, Dan Baulig will referee an online zoom chat about dahlias. September's confab will surely discuss the National Show Aug. 26-27. Take this opportunity to hear other opinions, ideas, questions and solutions.

Topic: Portland Dahlia Society Monthly/Tuesday Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86144472186?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86144472186?pwd=YmtUalRRb21hTlhnNnJQUXhISEw2QT09)

[pwd=YmtUalRRb21hTlhnNnJQUXhISEw2QT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86144472186?pwd=YmtUalRRb21hTlhnNnJQUXhISEw2QT09)

Meeting ID: 861 4447 2186

Passcode: Dahlias1!

WALK AND TALK

Erik and Deborah divided the crowd and each strolled a herd of visitors on a walking talking tour of the Dell, elucidating in inimitable style their beginnings here in 1993, though dahlias have grown in the space since the 1880's. They



highlighted the 7 individuals who donate all the dahlias and all the volunteers who help out. Deborah expounded on how rare in nature octoploidy is (8 strands of DNA unlike human 2 strands of double helix) while Erik shared the history of the conquistadores and Dr. Andreas Dahl. Jenna set up a membership table where she and Joe answered questions, passed our FAQs and signed up new members. Tell your friends there will be another opportunity to tour the Dell on September 16 at 11:00 AM.

BOOK AND MOVIE REVIEWS

Christine reports that as gardeners it is important to know about the soil beneath our feet. Entangled Life by Merlin Sheldrake explains how mycorrhizal fungi and mycelium work with each plant and how this system connects all plants together to form an underground communication system. If you prefer watching movies to reading books, view Kiss the Ground or Fantastic Fungi.

F L O R I B U N D A !

Our show began at 6 am when Rangers escorted Erik, Tinnee and Lou into the Dahlia Dell. Deb, Steve, Sara, Jen arrived at 5:30 PM to do the same. Mini followed to pick left over blooms for Jenna's photo op stop. Catching a plane at 10 AM, Jenna built both photo sites and several bouquets all night long complete with special ##'s. Meanwhile, John, Ted, Tim, Jen, Lou, and and other wonderful volunteers began setting up tables in the Galleria. Pat supervised table





cloths and Tinnee carted in all the screens for displaying the photo competition. By 8 PM, several people piled containers and dahlias all over our set up tables. Who

drove (and camped) in the camper truck overnight? Steve, Tara and Jenn

helped Team Dietz until 2 AM; Lou



stayed up all night toting his beautiful blooms into their proper places. By 9 am more novices had entered exhibit blooms than ever before! Thank you to all who brought dahlias to exhibit. You made such a spectacular FLORIBUNDA!



DEARTH OF JUDGES

Alas, Covid stunted our judges' training; we have so few now. (Please consider learning how to be a dahlia judge!) Fortunately, Dan and Billy flew down from Portland to pitch in. Thus, judging still ran so long that Erik had to pay extra to keep the Galleria open until the Court of Honor could be finished. Guy and Tinnee deserve praise for their marathon judging: first the photography,



then all the special
 the Head Table!
 stamina. DSC made
 spent over 2 years
 to eliminate paper
 judging. She trained
 E and Kauna to use
 record the judges'
 Amazingly, the cell
 errors in the written
 were even turned in!
 improvement!
 Leandro will
 this method and



classes, and then
 Dedication and
 tech history! Kristi
 devising a program
 notebooks when
 Chad, Ginger, Julie
 their cell phones to
 decisions.
 recorders found
 results before they
 Such an
 Monterey and San
 continue to debut
 then on to the entire



ADS next year, maybe??? Thank you to Kristi and Ginger for



dedicating all day to compiling results on cells and on paper. Rachel Pearl, artist of hyper realistic huge dahlias, set up her studio in back with the multiple entries. Is there



such a thing as too much publicity? What a line awaited the 10 am opening to the public! So many people thronged to see our beautiful dahlias, but not before stopping at Jenna's three

Photo Op Spots. They took lots of pix and posted them, inviting friends to drop by our show too. Having the massive photo opportunities outside kept the traffic flowing much





better inside. The membership table teams did a great job of urging strollers to vote for People's Choice, join DSC and sign up for our Tuber Sale. Our wandering ambassadors fielded questions about what the colored dots meant, whose flowers were these, how long do they last, and **ARE THESE REAL?** What an amazing buzz of interest and amazement filled our show hall! Patricia, in charge of the kitchen and lunch, was delighted by not one but **TWO** birthday cakes Steve had designed for her at Noe Valley Bakery.



AWARDS AND GLORY

Tinnee stayed up most of Saturday night making individual signs for each



award and contestant on the Court of Honor. From five young growers, Abby S. repeated

Best Junior Bloom with a lovely Abby, a pink dahlia. Julie E nailed Best Novice

Bloom with a honking Spartacus and also scored with Best Old Fashion Bouquet. Chris Dix triumphed with Best in Show with an orange Rock Run Matt. Congratulations to Tim W for amassing Novice Sweepstakes; Lou's all-nighter paid off with Amateur Sweepstakes; Team Dietz quite proudly waved their Open Sweeps ribbon. There were many



new names on the Head Table. Lucy



and Tara were stunned seeing orange dots and their entries on the Court of Honor, lovely x3 Bracken Chris Best Novice behemoth, My Hero, a delighted Julie L Photograph. The Steve and Judi's frizzy NXO. Her last minute Maki, garnered Peggy Largest Dahlia in the Steve's munificent \$85 Waterlily, Pam



however briefly. A Sarah won Ellen and Multiple. That ruffled Best AA, belonged to who also shot Best crowd gasped at Kung Fu Kitty, Best entry, a 12 1/2 inch bragging rights to World! Lou plucked prize for Best Howden. Tim tickled

everyone with an exceedingly pink arrangement called “Barbie.” By a huge margin, Tim captured the public’s eye with a pink first-year seedling to secure People’s Choice! Some people missed the joke in Tara’s Aquanet arrangement; checkout which dahlias went to the beauty parlor and which one didn’t.

(Some pundits



distinguish Formal Dec from Informal Dec by saying the ID “had a bad hair day.”) Tara knew how to read her schedule and also took Best Washington Introduction with a fine Chimacum Katie. With a single entry, Tinnee won Nature’s Oddity with a two-headed confused Franz Kafka. Our Court of Honor, bedecked by gorgeous pink ribbons, belied Jenna’s Barbie theme for this year. So beautiful! Click here for a list of

ALL the winners <https://sfdahlias.org/dsc-dahlia-show-2023-winners/>



anemone with yellow puffy tubes needs to be grown more. Heather also exhibited a beguiling white miniature, Scott's Snocap. Jessica, where did you get

NEW AND COOL

Soderman's fabulous Kung Fu Kitty amazed the crowds. Heather's sweet Sandia Summertime, a white



your huge anemone, Mombo? The Mortons dazzled us with Hollyhill Tiger Rose, a stunning x3 variegated waterlily. Sarah's Millennium scintillated with shining pink/red/white/rose. The Ko's dazzled the public with Yara Falls a bi purple and white. We had 8 dahlia triples on the the seedling bench!! Amazing. Lou scored highest with these yellow beauties, Eden Alice. The one he's named Sunday Steve came in a close second. (Erik capitalized on Lou's seedling success and sold naming right\$ to Eden Sunday Steve, Eden Lilian, and Eden Alice. More later....)





SMOOOTH SUNDAY



With
all
the



staging, judging and tabulating
behind, DSC felt free to thoroughly



enjoy Sunday. Patricia reveled in yet another birthday celebration with two more cakes. Lou addressed form and color questions in his mini-judging seminar. Deborah, Lucy and Tara formed



the Fancy Pants club. Erik entertained previous naming rights donors, with Brian showing off a glorious triple of Eden Monique. Erik led prominent rosarians David and Marian to the Dahlia wall proselytizing conversion to dahlia membership. Curtis was so happy to see the Ko's Marcia Pat win Best Maxwell Introduction. Christine loved Chris D's x1 and x3 Northlake Heritage, pristine lacination





even in Walnut Creek's blazing heat. She commented that everyone seemed so happy; dahlias seem to release oxytocin in us, just like petting a kitty. Lola passed around a dahlia seed packet from the Strybing Arboretum; it did NOT carry the warning that seeds do NOT breed true and mostly produce open-centered dahlias of dubious quality.... At 4:00 we shoed out the lingering public and Lou distributed checks. Congrats to Alessandro, one of many first-timers for photo ca\$. With checks stashed away, they let the

Krackens of Tear Down loose. So many people set to: carrying containers of various exhibitors, collecting best blooms for hospitals, dumping heavy 5-gallon



water buckets, drying and packing ceramics, hauling photo screens, folding tables and packaging left-over food. In less than 1 1/2 hours it was over—for another year. Think about what you enjoyed most about our show so we can do it again next year; and think about how we might make 2024 even better!

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

Not only are Keven's SoCal dahlias blooming beautifully, his scion, Kaden Lam, thrives as well. Congratulations!

Phil and Marilyn had so many luscious blooms they donated buckets full to Jenna for our Floribunda! foto op spots. Phil said, "One of the best aspects of growing dahlias is giving them away."

Everyone enjoys them—so it's great to bring joy." Bea, 97, sent in this photo of her Blomquist Candy Corn which finally bloomed. Erik loved sharing his Hilltop Kempers in the stunning vase made by Marilyn W.

DAHLIA DELLIONS

One morning throngs of Asian photographers swarmed the Dell.





The Chinatown Photography Club shot thousands of pix. GG Ruby Tuesday and Karma Choc did star turns. Even with a blown center, Hollyhill Exotica turned heads. Mini, Karen and Brigid filled milk carton vases and walked out looking like ruffled brides maids. Bonaventure delighted Deborah with its great size and color. The day before Deborah left for Portland, disaster struck: the 20 year old PVC pipe sprung a small geyser—on the hottest day yet. Steve tried to hand-water everything, such

a back breaking goal. Then our HERO arrived. Coming all the way from Lodi, Ken and Kathy assessed the problem, picked up tools and pieces at Ace Hardware and fixed not one but two PVC breakdowns! Wow! Suddenly hours





of tedious Gunga Din water totting for the rest of the season was averted and water pressure restored to Deborah's entire system. **THANK YOU, KEN!**



What a savior! The right man on the right day at the right time with the right knowledge.

SUMPTUOUS SEPTEMBER

Our gardens have reached their peaks. Wow! So great to have so many beautiful blooms and to be able to give so many away. Invite friends and dahliaphiles over. Go visit other dahlia

plots, especially 116 Arch St. near Brotherhood Way. Sisterhood Gardens will blow you away! Lots of parking. Erik and Deborah will give walking tours of the Dell on Saturday, September 16 at 11 am. Invite friends and colleagues.

DEADHEADING

Aggressively cut back to new growth when you deadhead. This will stimulate your dahlia plant to try for another shot at producing seeds even though the daylight gets less each day. September blooms can be magnificent. Disbud! Disbudding gives you larger dahlias and stronger stems.





COCKTAILS, ANYONE?

The major plagues of September for dahlias are caterpillars, aphids, earwigs, slugs and in warm areas diabratica. We love our butterflies, but those ravenous caterpillars are problematic! Kristine Albrecht and Iris Wallace actually have special boxes where they protect their swallow tail and monarch butterflies from predatory wasps. They bring the eggs and caterpillars inside these boxes full of leafy provender until they metamorphose into lovely fliers.

This protects both the beautiful pollinators and her prize-winning blooms. I add a little Captain Jack's Dead Bug to my weekly canister of goodies. I'm cutting back on my fertilizer. Mildew floats in on foggy mornings and does not burn off. I'm using dishwashing soap, baking soda, whole milk, stylet oil and a fungicide from the shelf at Lowe's. I can still see some green leaves but it feels like a loosing battle this year. Grrr! As for diabratica: they look like ladybugs only green and especially love yellow and white dahlias. They tend to be active in warmer (over 80 degrees) areas. A commercial grower, Mike, used a small computer vacuum to suck up the insects and then feed them to chickens. The hand-held vacuum did not muss the blooms and the chickens were delighted. In really warm areas, spider mites can move in swiftly. One day the leaves look a little dry and the next the entire plant looks skeletal covered with almost microscopic little bugs and webs. If you see it on one plant, quickly cut the

entire affected area and transport it to garbage NOT COMPOST as fast as you can. There are very expensive sprays you can buy that kill these wee beasts—and a lot of other things as well. Read up and weigh your conscience.

OPULENCE AND PHILANTHROPY

Your garden runneth over! Your clumps should be pumping out blooms like crazy. If not, you are not cutting back to new growth correctly. If you have disbudded, cutting back to find the junction where new green sprouts emerge



should be obvious. If you overlooked disbudding, this is more challenging. (Come by the Dell on a Wednesday or Saturday morning and get a hands-on lesson.) If your dahlia plant begins looking brown and skeletal prematurely, you need to severely **CUT BACK TO NEW GROWTH**. We should have a good September and ample October, so 8 more weeks of good growing and blooming time. **Act NOW**. Take a few entries to the San Leandro Library Dahlia Show September 9-10. Volunteer to judge or clerk. Novices, bring blooms to our meeting; begin setting up by 6:30. Use official entry cards, please with ADS numbers. Give blooms away to friends, neighbors, colleagues, relatives, libraries and Senior Centers. Invite friends and fellow growers over for a convivial garden party. Tara took a bouquet over to the Tennis



Pavilion to invite them all to our Walk 'n Talk September 16th. My friend, Bob, once took my mama a 5-gallon bucket filled with magnificent A's and B's. He pushed her down her corridor so she could give dahlias away to all her friends from her wheelchair. He made so many people happy. Let me know how you've spread the joy this month.



Yours in dirt,
Deborah

Photo credits: Adams, Dietz, Frey,
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Tanlimco,
Webmaster et al: Payam, Laura, Mini

