



Dahlia Society  
of California

# Dahlia Society of California Newsletter



## **NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday, November 14, at 7:30. Program: Elections and Lou demonstrates the art of digging out, dividing and preserving dahlia tubers. Maybe he will perform his magic trick to separate dahlia seeds from their chaff. This is the night to bring your questions and camera. Who will bring goodies to share with your fellow hungry gardeners?



## **OCTOBER NOVICE ONLY MINI SHOW**

Wow! We enjoyed 11 times more entries into our final mini competition than last year. The waterlilies taught us that some “go to sleep” that is, they curl up out of sunlight into a form just a quarter the size of normal. Also, wolf petals, obtrusive inflorettes that deviate from the rest of the petals, should

be discretely plucked before competition. Ultimately, Ken and Kathy’s Eden Barbarosa, Anita’s Gitts Attention and Maggie’s waterlily went petal-a-petal. Our group voted for Maggie’s Day Dreamer as Best in Show!





Erik showed elucidating slides about digging up and storing tubers. Deborah suggested waiting 2 weeks after cutting down to let the tuber skins thicken, although other people say they lop, dig and divide the same day. For an on-line how-to go to YouTube “Kristine Albrecht #156.” This is an excellent moment by moment video of dividing a huge clump with scissors and her DeWalt Multi tool. Ken spoke of his hydrogen peroxide solution to sanitize the tubers and the soil where a bacterial infection had caused problems. Deborah and Lou will experiment with this and let you know the results. Kauna shared her exploits at the National Show and then showed us how she’s made some cuttings and darling head leis with Ti leaves and dahlias!! So cool.



### **SUCH YUMMY GOODIES!**

Collette, Alex and Jen T baked us crunchy chocolate chip cookies. Never too many! Lola brought us harvest grapes, so succulent and sweet. Steve’s doughnut holes slipped down several gullets. OHHHH those See’s Halloween chocolate balls from Maggie disappeared so fast. Katy, where did you find those extraordinary

pumpkin double-dipped wonders? Thank you to Jenna for her apple strudel bites. Kathy, your recipe for pumpkin bread should be inscribed on gold recipe tablets! Wow. Thank you all for so generously sharing with your fellow dahlianistas.

## SPREADING THE WORD

Fresh off her talk at the National Show in Portland, Deborah used her box of dahlias to launch another Dahlias 101 lecture. Soon the questions were flying. Many vowed to grow dahlias in 2024. The Garden Club of Orinda's gracious luncheon featured dahlia centerpieces and dahlia napkins! To Deborah's delight, a classmate from 1972 re-introduced herself. Such a great surprise!



## MICRO DAHLIAS?

Here is the latest mini-video from Portland Larry all about growing Micro Dahlias:

<https://youtu.be/J5vANmUAXOU>

Here is a tour of the famous Hollyhill Gardens:

<https://youtu.be/nXtR-Uj6UJo>

## FLORIBUNDA!

Hosting the last show of the year, San Leandro staged a lovely competition in their local air -

conditioned library. They built a



magnificent Photo Op Stop just inside the entrance. Congratulations to Lou, Deborah, Ellen, and Louise for all staying on the Court of Honor. Click [here](#) for the complete COH.

Ingenuity and humor characterized terrific arrangements. Quamrun riffed on Drake's Brewing Company with a lovely tower of Bloomquist Jeans, then dazzled with her tribute to the museum with framed dahlia art. Ellen's Ghirardelli Chocolates stunned with Karma Chocs in sundae glasses accompanied by a chocolate-bearing cable car. Many people laughed out loud at Ellen and Cris's Bayside Golf Course, especially when they discovered the hole flag. So glad to see Rachel Perl set up a little atelier in the back corner. (She sells prints and original oils, if you're thinking about the holidays....)



## NEW AND COOL



From way down Obispo way, the Soderstroms beguiled us with several new and must-have-next-year varieties. Check out their River's Sonia 7605 and honking big AA Wyn's Delta



Frank. Although a couple years since release, their Hapet Champagne also pleased a lot of people. Sol Rise, a BB flame, made hybridizer Iris proud. Chris D's lovely BB FD looked like molten redness personified. MMM.





## RED CARPET DAHLIAS

Remember reading in the July newsletter about Oscar de la Renta designing gowns and bags with exquisite dahlia prints? Erik reports “Guess who wore one to the opening of the San Francisco Antiques Show?” Wow, Shelly! Such a fabulous frock!

## 2024 SHOW SCHEDULE

Lou is trying to produce our 2024 Show Schedule by New Years. He lists all the special categories like Best Variegated and Best x3 BiColor and Best Paradise Introduction.

However, we need your help. What will you sponsor? Do you have a favorite variety or form? Would you like to sponsor (\$10-50) any existing categories? Will you support what you pledged last year? Please let Lou or Deborah know asap. We are doing this so far in advance so you will be able to buy before April and grow especially for our Floribunda! show. Look at last year’s schedule. For example, Old Fashioned Bouquet, Smallest Pom and Best BiColor need \$pon\$ors. The photo categories need \$supporter\$. Get involved. Ante up!

## PORTLAND DAHLIA CONVERSATION

It's always on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM. They don't publish the link any longer because of people trying to get on that don't belong. So if anyone is interested, send an email to [info@portlanddahlia.com](mailto:info@portlanddahlia.com) requesting for the information.

Then Dan sends you the link. This covers a wide range of topics and queries with people from all over making suggestions and comments. It's fun and enlightening.

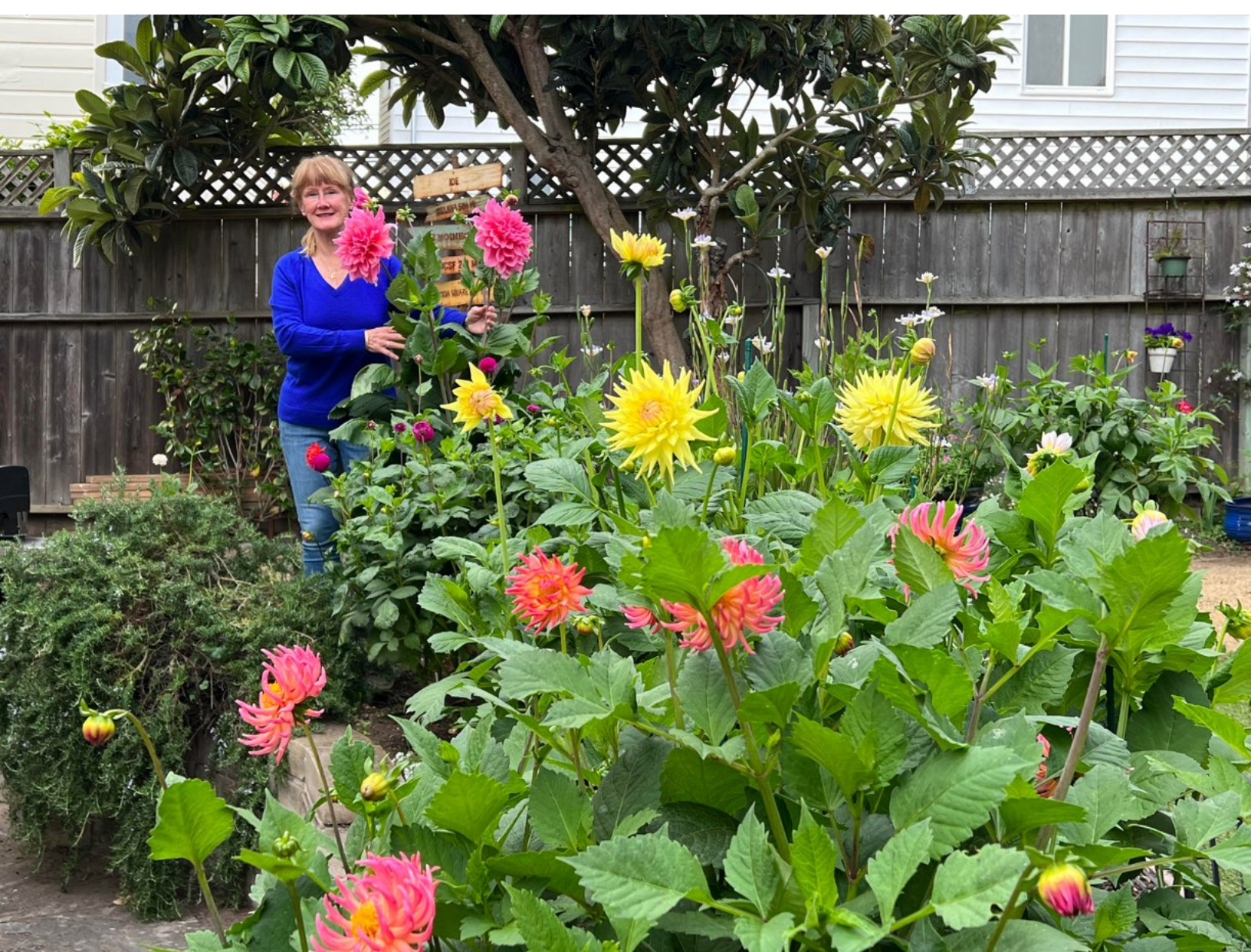
## LADIES WHO LUNCH

After putting in a full morning at the Dell, the Wednesday volunteer crew dined in Brigid's gorgeous dahlia garden in the Sunset. With 35 clumps, Brigid decorates with a bouquet of dahlias in every room. Her neighbors love this Mini and Karen supped black rice with peanut



season. Tara, Deborah, sumptuously on exotic sauce.





## **SISTERHOOD GARDENS**

**Steve and Deborah took a field trip to Tim Wong's gorgeous neighborhood garden at 116 Arch Street near Brotherhood Way. Wow! His Augie Whites are huge! His first year seedlings are still churning out blooms as Tim prepares to collect seeds for next year's seedling crop. "Using mesh organza gift bags, you can isolate flowers before the bees get to them. This allows us to transfer pollen to our desired seed parent when the flower is ready. We can remove the bag, pollinate our desired flower, and then replace the bag to let the seed**



head mature without bees introducing unknown pollen sources.



This can allow us to produce plants that may be closer to having our desired traits," says Tim.

Check out Tim's wild Halloween display!



### T-ZING TEMPTATIONS

Many of you have asked about the wonderful T shirts walking around our Show. **CELEBRATE DIVERSITY: Plant Dahlias!** Steve D underwrote the design and printing and then donated all the money to DSC! He says

there are still some left in Sm, Med, Lg, XL, and XXL in pink, spring green and natural. If you want one for yourself or you are thinking of holiday presents, text Steve: 415-637-3461 with your order. Still \$12 for your first T if you are a DSC member; \$20 each for the rest and \$10 shipping.

**CLICK!**

With the change in schedule to print the ADS Bulletins (the next issue is now December), there is a need to modify the entry deadline of the photo contest. The new date is **DECEMBER 15th, 2023**. All other rules remain the same which can be found on the ADS website.

Entries should be submitted to [photocontest@dahlia.org](mailto:photocontest@dahlia.org)

There are 10 categories with 3 submissions allowed for each. All can be submitted to Debbie Pavlich on line. Go for it!

**CORSAGE FACTORY**  
Working down to calluses, Jenna crafted boutonnieres for the Parks Alliance Galla until her fingers were raw. Luminaries and big donors sported her darling works of art for a fabulous evening fete. Being invited to a Cornell Dinner, Jenna designed a red and white bouquet.





## DAHLIA SAFARI IN WASHINGTON

Besides sibs, Mini visited



several dahlia hot spots on her trip through Washington. “Tall dahlias,” amazed Mini. Indeed, 3’ tall Elviras! 7’ tall bushes. Check out the Puget Sound Dahlia Society Garden in Volunteer Park. Many of the local community garden plots grew dahlias. “One of the men sold bouquets at their neighborhood pub and donated the money to a senior center.” Another neighbor cultivating “something like 30 plants” featured a stand sharing free bouquets. Good scouting, Mini!.



## **BIG GREEN DEAL**

Elizabeth offers her Home Depot greenhouse for \$100 or Best Offer. It's 6'x 8' x 7 1/2' with multiple levered windows. It would need to be disassembled at her home and transported away. Contact Elizabeth at [Elizabeth.mulkerrin@gmail.com](mailto:Elizabeth.mulkerrin@gmail.com)

Must be gone by late November.

## **HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?**

Ayako and her husband love growing dahlias. Even late in the season she cuts so many that she can share them with the elderly



denizens of a nearby group home. Wow! Kalpana double checked the



**name of her big beauty: Labyrinth! With much hope, Tara planted a cutting in late July; October rewarded her with huge glorious Rolfs!**

## **DAHLIA DELL DOINGS**



**A mountain of rich soil excited Sarah's hopes for the Hillside. Alas, the heavy equipment just moved the mountain of fancy dirt to the Valley. Sigh. Tinnee, Lou and Jerry watered heavily to**



**obviate the death threat of our 4-day heat wave. Check out Jerry's organized tool bucket. In anticipation of the Great Hillside Renovation, our Hillions have begun cutting down their clumps to hasten the hardening of the tuber skins (if the gophers left any tubers!). Load by load, Sue has begun carting hers off. Purportedly, the massive work begins mid November. Cross your petals! Here is the link for the plans:**  
<https://www.millercomp.com/dahlia-garden-ggp>



**Karen relates that her mom sewed**



**the darling pocketed apron covered with flowers back in the '70's . Karen decided to don it for repotting a bunch of 4x4's into gallon pots for overwintering. It's like wearing a hug from her mama. To celebrate her birthday, three of Deborah's classmates from college brought a wonderful picnic and good stories. Almost looking like bridesmaids, they each left with huge bouquets. Lou's section is literally going to seed**

**and he's pleased. He has his eye on several germ lines (multi-generational genetic combinations) for promising results next year.**

**Great to meet Christine Davis. Christine recognized Deborah from her talk at the National Show in Portland and explained that in addition to**



**her**

**Paradise Road Flower Farm, she interprets ASL (American Sign Language) for the deaf including fly**



**fishing classes and skydiving instructions. Thanks to John P.**





and Tara for all their help. Steve really hunkered down to pull weeds and rake out beautifully. He likes to “read” the footprint patterns the next day including spotting raccoon, raven and possibly opossum. Love the Salish Twilight Girl still blooming in Pat’s section. Look at the huge surprise in the Petting Zoo. Grandpa’s Gift indeed!



## NOVEMBER NOSTRUMS

As our light continues to dwindle, you will notice spindlier stems and

more popped centers.

Just a sign of the time of the year. Keep the weeds and leaves from piling up under your plants; they attract unwelcome bugs.

Continue to cut down to new growth until you are ready to call it a season. Then cut down to the final 5 notches. Some people cover these exposed canes with plastic bags, Saran Wrap and rubber bands or aluminum foil to protect from water sliding down the open

tube and rotting the crown. If you have just a few, put a 5-gallon bucket over the top and put a pretty flowering something on top of the bucket so it’s not so ugly. The bucket protects from too much moisture and bugs.



## **LABEL LABEL LABEL!**

This is your last opportunity to make sure your clumps are what their labels purport to be. I use this time to write in pencil: TS for Tuber Sale, O for Orphan. For example: my Hollyhill Dragon Fire variegation turned into solid red, very handsome but NOT HH Dragon Fire. Great for our Orphan bin. Do not label junk O; O is for unknown or unnamed GOOD dahlias to be sold at our bargain basement price in April. I write Leave In for those dahlias which began this season as cuttings. I like to give their roots another year to produce really robust tubers. I also like to leave my first year A and AA's in situ. They start earlier and bloom longer the second season. TOSS means just that: trash. For example: I have two Abbys which from the beginning have unfurled with popped centers. Grrr. Right now they are providing fun color in the Dell, but I don't want them and no one else would either. They'll get totally tossed as soon as they stop blooming.



## **HEAT WAVE HORROR**

Five days of scorching temperatures burned up all the cuttings I had percolating in my wee greenhouse. So tragic. But I am starting with more late-season snippets this weekend. Geesh. So sad. Good to know there are plenty of little sprigs bursting out of lower stems due to this little heat boost. Try it for fun.

## **SEEDS**

Now is the time to collect seeds. Whether you hand pollinate and bag up your chosen mother head (like Tim and Kristina do) or you let the pollinators scramble genes willy nilly, let it bloom



naturally, loose its petals (it's ok to help the last few dissipate). These should harden up and eventually turn brown. I sometimes cut mine a little green and take them inside in a cup of water to finish maturing without heavy morning dew which can lead to head rot. These can be stored intact or with the seeds separated out. You will begin sowing seed in February or March. Each seed is its own unique genetic combination. Such a challenge!

Yours in dirt,  
Deborah

Photo credits: Dahlstedt, Dietz, Donahue, Gaensler, Ide, Kaiser, Kurhan, Mulkerrin, Wong, Yee

**Proofmeister: Steve**

**Webmaster and media: Payam, Laura, Mini**



**Erik hawking  
Lost n Found**

**The  
Guardian**



# Brigid with amazing late season KA's Cloud



**First Frost but not  
in the Bay Area**

