



Dahlia Society of California Newsletter



NEXT MEETING: March 12 @ 7:30 at 9th and Lincoln. Program: Might some members bring tubers and/or cuttings for sale? If you bring tubers, please make sure they are labeled clearly. Deborah will demonstrate milk carton technique for jumpstarting tubers. Who will bring sustenance for our hungry gardeners?

MR. FEBRUARY

Tim Wong shared his four years of development at Sisterhood Gardens at 116 Arch Street just off Brotherhood Way. He admitted that as a rookie, he made a lot of beginner mistakes; he massed all his tubers together without labels. (!) Overly generous, he let the public pick his plants down to nubbins. He planted 12" apart. This last season he grew





250 named varieties, 300+ seedlings all in 21 rows lined with anti-gopher hardware cloth. He brought wonderful Show 'n Tell items: a



whole bag of Soil Gard, a microbial fungicide which biota to rid soil of unwanted problems. Tim overwinters in plastic shoe boxes with drilled holes in the sides, subsumed with a mix of CocoBrick and vermiculite. His gurus, Iris and Kristine, turned him on to an excellent mix of legumes as a cover



crop to renitrogenate his soil. He diagramed his corral and criss cross method of staking. Tim really enjoyed getting so many



neighbors involved in both dahlias and

vegetables. They look forward to crafting a long, tiled staircase with mosaics of dahlias and pollinators.

DAHLIA NAMING RIGHTS

Erik capitalized on the fact that Lou ran out of relatives to name his new introductions after. Now Erik auctions the right to name an absolutely unique genetic winner for the person of your choice. He walked us through many donors, their namesakes and the beautiful blooms bearing their appellations. Here is Eden Sunday Steve with Steve and Lou. Check out Eden Alice, Sarah's mama. We all love



both our Patricia and Eden Patricia. Tinnee honored her mother, Lillian. Thank you so much to Lou for allowing Erik to sell your naming rights. It pays for our not inexpensive meeting room, tuber sale rent and the big Galleria for our August Show.

YUMMIES



Napoleon said an army marched on its belly; surely dahlianeers shovel on their appetites, too. What a sumptuous Valentines spread! The cookies must have been delicious, because they all disappeared: Jenna's peanut butteriness, Susan's oatmeals, and Alex and Allison's chocolate cupcakes. Anita's chocolate peanut butter brownies with caramel.... all gobbled up. How refreshing of Cara to bring Buddha Hands and a whole basket of kumquats. Such zing! Thank you John D , for the cake. and John and Anette and Lucy spoiled us with chocolates. Ken and Kathy dazzled our palates with



chocolate covered strawberries. Oh my! And where did Susan find the exquisite goat cheese torte with graceful zucchini thatching ? Wow! Thank you all for supporting your fellow DCSers so lavishly!

PANOPLY OF GORGEOUS DAHLIAS



Hapet Sweetheart



Hollyhill Finger Paint



Hollyhill Letitia

Hollyhill Pinkie



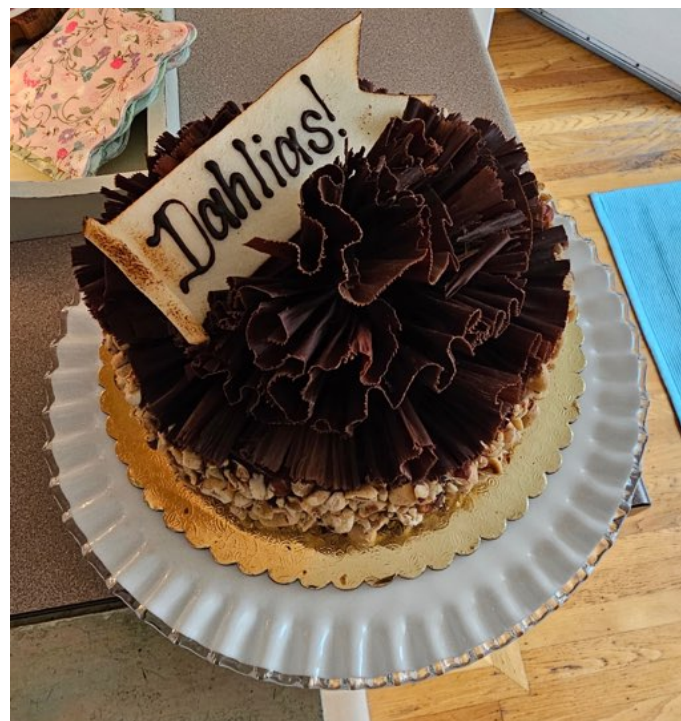
Hollyhill Lilibet





CRAFT DAY #2

Jenna initiated another day of potluck lunch to finish the centerpieces and apron swag for the PSW Conference. Lisa built a surprising Middle Eastern salad and Lucy bowled us over with a spectacular chocolate confection. Mimosas spurred chatty conversations. The craftier crew concocted dahlia-esque tissue





paper blooms. Tanaya really had the special touch to fluff her petals so beguilingly. Young Soraya crenellated multi colors. Deborah and Sarah opted for double sticky taping magnets; professional fingers Steve chose to sharpen 100 pencils!



DUES DUE!

It's time to renew your annual ADS (American Dahlia Society) and/or DSC (Dahlia Society of California) membership. Our membership year is from May 1, 2024 through April 30, 2025 The dues are as follows:

Dahlia Society of California only:

Individual Membership.....\$10.00
Family Membership.....\$15.00

American Dahlia Society AND Dahlia Society of California

Individual Membership.....\$40.00
Family Membership.....\$50.00

To learn about each of the above categories and to join please visit dahliadell.org and click on Join. You may also print out the membership

form and mail it with your check to
Debbie Frank,
226 28th Ave,
SF CA 94121.

FIELD DRESSING: ADVANCED
Sarah, Mini and Lucy thought they signed up for Field Dressing 101 when they volunteered to help Deborah at the



Wardens' garden. Field dressing is where you expose the clump; remove 1/2 to 3/4 of the tuber mass; refertilize; leave the untouched roots in place; rebury. "Looks like surgery," commented Mini. However, all the Warden's dahlias were in gopher cages which meant the whole megillah had to be dug up, emptied, and the mass divided. So instead of 21st-century surgery, it more closely approximated Civil War field amputations. Then the basket had to be returned to the hole, half filled, tuber section replaced and gopher cage refilled with soil, all the time keeping the labels intact. Truly an advanced class! Two beds and 4 hours later, knackered but pleased, Sarah, Lucy and Mini said they'd learned a lot.

Calendar of Events

Dahlia Society of California

Tuber Sale: April 27th @9:00 am Hall of Flowers 9th and Lincoln, Golden Gate Park

DSC Show: Aug. 17-18 Galleria 9th and Lincoln

Walk 'n Talks: check website dahliadell.org Aug. & Sept. dahliadell.org

Central Coast DS

Tuber Sale: April 14, 9:30 centralcoastdahlias.org

Judging School: July 27 date: TBD

Show: Aug. 10-11

centralcoastdahlias.org

Monterey Bay DS

Tuber Sale: April 13, 9-11:00 mbdahlias.org

Show: Aug. 24-25



mbdahlias.org

San Leandro

sanleandrodahliasociety.org

Tuber Sale: May 4; 10-12

Show: Aug 31-Sept 1

sanleandrodahliasociety.org

National Show

Wenatchee WA Sept. 6-9 dahlia.org

HILLSIDE COMPLETION

It's been fascinating watching the hillside transformation. What a difference! It will be so much safer and certainly lovelier than before. Imagine how gorgeous it will be full of blooming dahlias!

AMERICAN DAHLIA SOCIETY PHOTO CONTEST

Larry Smith of the Portland Dahlia Society has beautifully presented the categories from the 2023 ADS Photo Contest into

**individual slide shows displaying the winners at the end of each.
Check them out and consider entering next year!**

Class 1, Dahlia Portrait

<https://youtu.be/JQXyZgzNW68>

Class 2, Multiple Blooms

<https://youtu.be/Q43hvVr6jLs>

Class 3, Garden View

<https://youtu.be/xH-ZUoZO3To>



Class 4,
Seedlings and
New
Introductions

[https://youtu.be/
Fc-qKNtCcJw](https://youtu.be/Fc-qKNtCcJw)

Class 5, Macro
(close up) View

<https://youtu.be/>

ADS PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST RESULTS

Click on this link to see Larry Smith's short reel of the first place ADS winners and Grand Prize recipient.

<https://youtu.be/0YGLhtcsFPI>

GOOD BUG OR BAD BUG?

If you see these dauntingly alarming black beasties in your garden, let them be! They will soon become beautiful dragon flies

In case you didn't know - these are dragonfly babies. Don't kill them, they eat thousands of mosquitoes when they mature. They don't stay creepy black bugs for long.



and eats hundreds of pesky mosquitos. They are dragon fly larvae awaiting their metamorphosis.

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST DAHLIA CONFERENCE

WOW! So many people wanted to attend we had to close registration early! DSC set a very high bar for South Coast Dahlia Society in San Louis Obispo next year. In order to accumulate photos, the total article will be in our April newsletter. Please send Deborah any photos you took: dahlia.dietz@gmail.com

CAVALCADE OF BEAUTIES



Irish Moon



Keltie Rose



Lady Kate



MUSTER INTO MARCH

Last chance to add chicken manure. Even some commercial chicken manures can be “hot.” That is, they might burn wee hair roots of cuttings. Spread your compost around liberally.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Stake out your plot. Lou uses a special rope so that all his stakes are exactly (!) as far apart as the next. Figure out where the sun comes from during the day so that you can put your short dahlias in front and taller ones towards the back. Set up your XL spread sheet. I like my varietal names along the left side and the ADS class #, size, form, color, source and garden position along the top. Tim and Tinnee drop photos into their XL grids. So fancy.

PAEAN TO THE GREEN SCREW



Wake up your tubers. If you haven't already, move your boxes of tubers to a warmer area. Most dahlias germinate in 62-67 degrees. Mine are up in my loft. Unless your tubers look wizened, do NOT add water. Many people use heating mats. I've found them problematic; instead of gently cozening my tubers, they bake them to death. Not good. Peggy coddles hers atop her hot water heater. Baker Bill used the top of his refrigerator. When I see a 1/4" green sprout, I dribble a couple drops of water on it; no more! There are no roots yet. No real moisture can be absorbed; do NOT drown your burgeoning

tuber. Since I grow several tubers in a single milk carton, I wait until a sprout is 3-5" tall. I transplant that single tuber into another

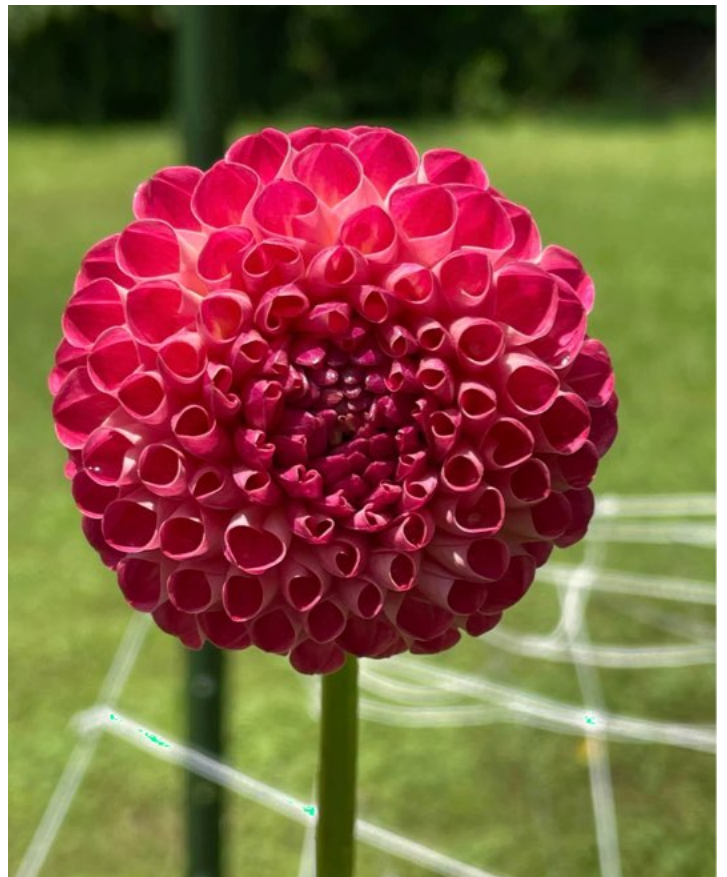
milk carton or a 1-gallon pot. Then it goes in my greenhouse window. The last stage is my protected south-facing deck, to harden off. Make sure all your labels are in place.

FIELD DRESSING

I am field dressing many of the clumps I left in the Dell. I expose the top of the clump; I use a hori hori knife or big snips to separate 1/2 to 3/4 of the clump which I take home to process for tubers. I leave the remaining segment intact in the ground. I add a little Dr. Earth Flower Girl and a teaspoon of calcium nitrate. I'm hoping to get some of the Soil Gard microbial additives Tim showed us and add this to the hole, too. Then I cover the remainder with compost. I re-mark my label and add it to my XL grid.

POTTED DAHLIAS

What to do with a potted-up dahlia that's over a year old? It has used most of the nutrients in its pot. Gently extricate the whole clump from the pot. Put it in a tub of water to help remove most of the old dirt. Scour out the old receptacle and rub it with bleach. Let the container dry 2-3 hours to let the bleach kill any remaining



problems associated with your container. Then half refill it. Add your secret sauce ingredients like Dr. Earth's Flower Girl, calcium nitrate, mycorrhizae, and bone meal. Mix up. Add your 1/3 to 1/2 of your tuber mass back in. Fill to 3/4 full. Now wait for germination in a sunny, warm spot. **DO NOT WATER!!** Wait for little green sprouts to pop out.

SNAILS AND SLUGS AND EARWIGS, OH MY!



EVERYTHING LOVES new green dahlia shoots. Get some Sluggo Plus or Deadline NOW. I am using some copper collars too, which repel snails and slugs but not earwigs. Because we have hooligan crows and ravens at the Dell, I am putting gopher cages over the top of my emerging dahlias to protect them from wretched peckers. I secure the baskets with chopsticks or metal U tangs. In the past, these otherwise wonderful birds have wreaked havoc digging up tubers and tossing them around; pecking the sprouts off but not eating them; pulling off

labels; and tipping over cages. Plastic soda bottles with the bottoms cut off make excellent protective sleeves from critters and wind. Spring is coming!!!!

Yours in dirt,
Deborah



Photo credits: Anderson, Bergman, Boley, Capps, Dietz, Gaensler, Harrow, Henriksen, Hoang, Kaiser, Jeppesen, Melnyk, Murphy, Rimshaw, Smith, Stojfs, Susan, Tobiason





URL Queen: Mini

Nitpicking proofer: Steve

