



Dahlia Society of California Newsletter



NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, August 12, 7:30 PM in the Hall of Flowers which can be reached through the parking lot on 10th and Lincoln. Program: Getting ready for THE SHOW!! How many ways can you contribute to a rousing success? Who will bring treats for the team?

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

Cara noted that the Monterey Bay Dahlia Society likes to sprinkle their town with anonymous small bouquets of dahlias. So Cara brought in a darling posy of dahlias to which she'd added a little card. "Take me home. I am a Lonely Bouquet. I was made for you by a member



of the Dahlia Society of California. Our purpose is to bring you happiness one flower at a time. Please let us know how you found this bouquet by emailing dahliasocietyofcalifornia@gmail.com Send along a comment or picture of me in my new home. SF Dahlia Show is Aug 16-17 at 9th and Lincoln, San Francisco. Open to all FREE!" You can find a layout of six of these cards at dahliadell.org. Here's the link: <https://www.dahliadell.org/lonely-bouquet> Thank you, Cara, for taking the time to arrange a PowerPoint, to print colorful notes, and to bring in bags! of mason jars to start the cascade of kindness.

FIDUCIARY SKULDUGGERY

Erik laid out the case against the Parks Alliance's mishandled funds. The Parks Alliance was formed to act as an umbrella organization to spread its 501C3 tax status over many small citizen groups like The Dahlia Society of California. While over \$3 million is missing, all is not lost. An

anonymous benefactor donated \$1 million to make up for some of the filched funds. Joe is working on presenting DSC's claim. Erik assures everyone, that DSC is still flush enough to throw a great Floribunda! next month.



DECODING ADS NUMBERS

3415, 2214 and anything starting with 76 are Deborah's favorite dahlias. But how to decipher these ciphers? The Dahlia Society of California instituted a numerical revolution several years ago to upgrade from a clumsy 3-digit to a much more efficient 4-digit tracking system for ALL competition dahlias. The first number is size; the second number is form. In dahlias without 5 sizes, the first two digits point to form; the last two digits refer to color. Using the ADS (American Dahlia Society) table that Jenn T passed out, Deborah showed us that 3 refers to BB size; 4 indicates Incurved Cactus; 15 blares as a bicolor. Thus, Jessica's ADS official number is 3415. 2 indicates B size; a second 2 stands for semi-cactus; 14 holds the spot for variegated yielding Rolf. These numbers can help you key out mislabeled beauties in your garden. By determining what the ADS number should be, you can look up the category in the back of your ADS Classification book and choose from the various 3415's offered. When you think you have it, go on line and say "Jessica, dahlia." Photos will pop up. Do they look like a sassy yellow bloom with bright red fingernail polish? Dadah! Yes! If you look up 2214 and say, "Hollyhill





Bewitched” do you see a photo of a lightly spotted orange and yellow beauty? NO????? Then that’s not the variegated one we were looking for. Now if you say “ Rolf” you will be rewarded by a stunningly flecked orange/red on orange. Ah! the correct name. Allison brought two mystery dahlias which we keyed out. 0110 brought us directly to Pennhill Dark Monarch. The other nondescript pink dahlia was trickier. Was it a formal decorative or a water lilly? Was it pink or a light blend of pinks and a little white. Annette tipped us to the final clue, “ Maybe a Karma variety?” Indeed, when looked up Karma we spotted Karma Prospero. When we said, “Karma Prospero, dahlia” into the Google browser, we saw photos of several pink dahlias that looked exactly like what we saw in front of us. Mystery solved.



Unfortunately, we were unable to finagle a name for the cute little orange fluff muffin that Jenna challenged us with. Deborah reminded us of a famous quote from Lou, “A dahlia without a name is just a weed.” Harsh. Without a name, your darling dahlia CANNOT be entered in competition (exception: arrangements). You must have

an official number on your entry form. Any dahlia you think has the potential to be entered in our show next month **MUST** have an official number. **NOW** is the time to try to ascertain that official number. 2 am on Friday into a Saturday show is a terrible time to pose the problem to a Senior Judge. Challenge yourself to key out dahlias in your patch. Start with size. Then Form. Then color. Come up with a number. Look up the options for that number. Does it match the name you have for it? Deborah invited DSC members to come by the Dell on a Tuesday or Saturday morning to get help with this sort of challenge. It gets easier.....

YUMMIES FOR GARDENERS' TUMMIES

Oh such goodies! Thank you, Lisa, for plums right off your tree and to Brigid for processing her plums into plum cake. Allison baked homemade zucchini bread. Ken and Kathy shared Lodi special shortbread cookies whilst Maggie graced us with her chocolate chip cookies. Mary and Pete treated us to KeyLime pie. **MMM.** Steve overwhelmed us with a box of doughnut “wholes.” Frances and John donated both popcorn and a darling posy of mignon single dahlia blooms. Soo cute. Thanks to Jenna, we had plates and napkins to serve up these delectable goodies. All of us appreciate your supporting our morale so deliciously.

EUROPE TOUR INCLUDES DAHLIAS!

Eric and Shelley kept their eyes out for dahlias in France, and found a nice collection in the town of Vannes, Brittany. Dahlias were planted in a garden outside the medieval





ramparts, as the centerpiece for a classical French formal Garden. The dahlias, a deep dark red with white tips were complimented by very dark leaves. While in Paris, Erik took Shelley to 114 Faubourg, a restaurant noted for its painted dahlia decor--and two Michelin stars.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dahlia Dell Open House Picnic Aug 3 Dahlia Dell GG Park

Sisterhood Gardens Aug. 8 12-3 PM

DSC Floribunda! Aug. 16-17 9th and Lincoln San Francisco

Eden Alice and Bumble Rumble Flowers of the Year

Dahlia Dell Walk 'n Talk Sept. 13 Dahlia Dell GG Park

Sisterhood Gardens Open House July 12 1:00 onwards SF

**SCDS Show Aug. 9-10 United Methodist Church
1515 Fredericks St. SLO**

**20th Ave Memory Raeann's Wild One
Dine Around Sept. 7**

**Monterey Show Aug. 23-24 Capitola Mall Ty Royal
MBDS Dine Around Aug. 2**

**San Leandro Show Aug. 30-31 Library San Leandro
Hollyhill Day Dream RayeAnn's Anteres**

ADS National Show Sept. 18-21 Chicago

Portland Show Oct. 4-5 Oaks Park Dance Pavilion Oregon

DAHLIA DELL PICNIC

Sunday, August 3, we will need a few stalwart lifters to carry tables and chairs down from the Conservatory to the grassy area across from the Dell @ 9:30 am. At 10, we will conduct a Walk 'n Talk around the teardrop and the Hillside. If there are enough people we will escort a second contingent. At noon, we will share a potluck lunch. Bring your friends, family and a dish to share. Heartily recommended: warm jackets, hats, vests and anything else you need to stave off the inclemently COLD summer we are experiencing. You never know.....



SHOW JOBS

WE NEED YOUR HELP. Please sign up for several of these opportunities to make Floribunda 2025 the best yet. **Friday** Aug. 15. Galleria: table set up, category signs on tables, dot explanations out, arrangement explanations and show banners aloft. Table cloths spread. **Saturday:** help run entries for overwhelmed exhibitors 7-9 am. Clerk with judges. We need three enthusiastic people to help with the Membership Table and People's Choice in each of 3 shifts: 10-12:30; 12:30-2:30 and 2:30-5:00. Roving ambassadors and help at the photo ops. **Sunday:** More roving ambassadors and help at the photo ops. More enthusiastic Membership volunteers: 10-noon;

noon-2; 2-4. Help with tear down including running containers to exhibitors and table break down. Please contact Deborah dahlia.dietz@gmail.com to volunteer. Join in the Joy!

SHOW POSTER

There is a full page show poster that Jen T and Jenna designed for this year's Floribunda! Download, print and distribute to all your favorite places. Jen also designed a sheet with 4 posters per page. [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/63e40f9c983b7a60a8e937a5/t/6880346a3dab981b89f31278/1753232506216/](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/63e40f9c983b7a60a8e937a5/t/6880346a3dab981b89f31278/1753232506216/Dahlia+Society+4x4.pdf)

[6880346a3dab981b89f31278/1753232506216/](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/63e40f9c983b7a60a8e937a5/t/6880346a3dab981b89f31278/1753232506216/Dahlia+Society+4x4.pdf)

[Dahlia+Society+4x4.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/63e40f9c983b7a60a8e937a5/t/6880346a3dab981b89f31278/1753232506216/Dahlia+Society+4x4.pdf)

Remember that your library card entitles you to \$2 of free printing every day—including full color printing.

For all things Show Related
go to: [https://
www.dahliadell.org/
exhibitors-info-2025-show](https://www.dahliadell.org/exhibitors-info-2025-show)

ACCURATE EXHIBITOR CARDS

Every entry **MUST** be
accompanied by an entry
card. **Exhibited by:** this
would be YOUR NAME.

Section: A for single blooms,
B for triples and C for x5; otherwise, we have sections D-I
depending of what special class you are entering. Print out your
show schedule and use it! Click here.

Judges initials: one of the judges will sign here when they
evaluate your exhibit. They will mark 1st, 2nd or no mark at all
depending on how tough the competition is. **Novice:** new
exhibitors or those who have not won 3 novice sweepstakes.
Amateur: those who have won 3 novice sweepstakes. Open:
Commercial growers. **Class:** this is the American Dahlia Society
explicit number for that specific variety. For example Jessica's
ADS # is 3415. Work these numbers out BEFORE our show!

Exhibitor number: Each exhibitor has their own specific exhibitor
number. If you exhibited at our show last year, click here for your
number. If not, email Deborah before the show to obtain your
exhibitor number. You can also get an exhibitor number at the
Galleria before you begin staging your entries. **Name of Bloom:**
this is the ADS pedigreed name. Click on this link for a blank
layout of 4 entry cards you can use. [https://www.dahliadell.org/
exhibitors-info-2025-show](https://www.dahliadell.org/exhibitors-info-2025-show)

DAHLIA SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA

Exhibited by: _____
(Name and Address)

fold here

Section: _____

JUDGES INITIALS _____

Class #: _____

Name of Bloom: _____

1st _____

2nd _____

☐ NOVICE

☐ AMATEUR

☐ OPEN

Exhibitor #: _____

PACKING LISTS

Must Haves

ADS Classification Book
or cell phone

Good to Haves

Styler Oil or Baby Wipes

Preprinted entry cards
Watering can

Towels (messes happen)
Pens
sharp scissors
Printed out Show Schedule
critical pages
Containers with frogs glued
in
and your name on bottom

ARRANGERS' ENCOURAGEMENT

Here are the 2025
arrangement categories:
THEME: Taste of California

501 "Wine Cellar" –
Using Burgundy (Dark Red/
Purple) and rose (Reds/
Pinks) colored dahlias

502 "Fruit Salad" – An
arrangement suggesting
summertime frivolity, must include fruit

503 "Citrus Grove" - A tall Arrangement using Orange, Yellow,
Flame and/or Bronze dahlias

504 "Kitchen Garden" – An Arrangement Evoking a cozy
feeling; include a vegetable or garden implement

505 "Hetch Hetchy's Finest" – An arrangement that
prominently features water.

506 Potluck – Exhibitor's choice (First time Arrangers only) no
foam or oasis

Use your imagination. You do NOT have to grow the dahlias you
use in arrangements; you can negotiate with other growers IN
ADVANCE or purchase them from a commercial source. Practice

Fat stems for extra support
5-gal. bucket for garbage at
set up; water for teardown

XL Spreadsheet of cultivars
with ADS #'s





putting your vision into reality BEFORE our show. See what evolves. You are allowed to fashion interesting sets, props, accoutrements to flesh out your vision. Go to town with this!!!

SILVER GLINTS OF YESTERYEAR

Meridith sent in an article about an 18" solid silver trophy from Shreves and Co. in SF awarded to George King in 1918 for Best Dahlias grown in Sonoma County. George's

grandson, Fred, looked back at that earlier time: no Golden Gate Bridge, no internet, but already his family was second generation Sonoma. Gardening was entertainment. Now Fred's son runs King's nursery, a boutique jewel tucked in residential Santa Rosa which grew out of the seed section of a turn-of-the-century grocery store. And YES! they still sell dahlias!

SISTERHOOD OPEN GARDENS

Several DCSers strolled Tim's glorious dahlia beds at Sisterhood Gardens off Arch Street. Tim explained that the entire row along



Tim sought crowd sourcing for good names for his new wonders. Brotherhood Way contains first year seedlings. Anything there with a clothespin attached is being “watched” for promise. The oblique rows off the first year seedlings are second

and third years which survived the first and second year culls. Tim sought crowd sourcing for good names for his new wonders. He also showed several products he uses to keep his dahlias so clean and green. Several Sandia Waterlilies stunned. Young Lila spotted an industrious gopher working valiantly to invade the hardware cloth trench protecting underground roots. Mr. Gopher was not at all





daunted by noisy picnickers 3 feet away! Alas.

FUNDRAISING OPEN GARDEN: Sisterhood Gardens invites you to their upcoming 9th Anniversary party on 8/9 from 12-3pm. Please take

a moment to RSVP for yourself/your guest AND share out the invite to the garden community! They'd love for as many people to come to the garden and help raise funds



needed to keep the garden going.

ALL'S FAIR!

Congratulations to Allison for winning several categories at the Marin County Fair including Best in Show! Yowza! Tara is proud of all the

cuttings she successfully brought to a 4x4" container full of roots! Jon thwarts rapacious bunnies with inverted tomato cages. Take that Wechit Wabbits!



DAHLIAS AT THE ORCHID SHOW

The annual orchid show convened sellers from all over the state hawking not only orchids but bromeliads, begonias, tilaanzias, carnivorous plants, cacti, succulents and even palm trees. Various plant societies were invited. Jenna negotiated excellent position (location location location) as the first booth in the door! Friday night



before catching a plane, Jenna laid out the dahlia table cloth, the info triptych, books, hand outs, and three

arrangements including orchid and oquette forms, a big bouquet and a wonderful all pink collection of all different forms. Wow! So eye catching. Four teams answered dahlia questions Saturday and Sunday: Jenn T. and Lucy; Peggy, Pat and Deborah; Erik and Shelly, and gracious Sarah who carted



the whole exhibit home. Thank you TEAM DSC!

HILLSIDERS AND DELLIANIS

Sue's east side has sent up a magnificent Stillwater Brilliant and a couple fun Bumble Rumbles with lots more in bud. Tim's waterlilies catch your eye in the front row. Sarah's second tier exuberance continues to burst forth with amazing blooms. In



the valley, Tinnee stuns with a



Sandia Nocturne, a deeeeeeep purple waterlily that defies a camera's color capabilities. Wow! Her Jowie Wowie is HUGE and such a cozy soft orange. Tinnee laughs that her humongous Kenora Jubilees were an accident!? Lou smiles on a couple of his third year seedlings including an AA orange SC and a bright B pink light blend. Four young interns are helping Deborah out this summer. They all started by learning how to disbud and deadhead on Elvira—the idea being that if they could identify the main bud and safely dispense with

the sibling
buds they
could
manicure ANY
dahlia. Irene
specializes in
watering the
potted dahlias;
Ananda
transplants
and
deadheads;
Chelsea nails
freeloading
weeds; and
while he can



do almost anything, Adam is
prized for his expert hose flaking.
They have a good time choosing
deadheads to take home after
their two-hour shifts. Twice
Steve took time from
ambassadoring to share fruit
treats with all the volunteers.
Melon balls! Berries. MMM! The
heavy dew which has been
descending in the early mornings
ladens the larger blooms like
KA's Cloud which then become
too heavy and snaps their stems.
Ken was delighted to take one
home to practice her
arrangement strategies. Brigid
has an unerring touch as to how

many of the crummy lower leaves to remove. When Nicole wondered what she'd do after she planted the final dahlia July 19 (yes, a lot late!) she got into transplanting 4x4's into gallon pots. What a relief on her face to learn that the latest flat full of 4x4's was going home to Mill Valley with Anita and Levi to be transplanted there and



not at the Dell. Who hiked over to see her old digging grounds? Pat with friend Nancy. So great to point out the new and cool dahlias of this year. Despite really heavy drizzel, Marilyn and Phil rolled over to check out the Dell. So fun to have visitors. Check us out on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

AUGUST ABUNDANCE!

**Buds and
Deadheads
Galore!**

**Sooo many
blooms and sooo
many buds! Even
if you don't
usually disbud,
August is the
month to give it a
shot. The longer,
stronger stems
and bigger
blooms justify the**



**extra exercise. Make sure you
deadhead down to NEW GROWTH!
If you don't, your poor dahlia will
begin to turn brown and stop
putting out new shoots. If you do,
you might have Halloween dazzlers
or even, gasp! Thanksgiving table
ornaments. Good stewardship
goals.**

Cocktail du Jour

**What are your garden issues this
month? Aphids? If you are vigilant
and catch these soon, you might
simply snip off the one or two buds**

that are infested and quell the whole epidemic before it begins. I see lots of ladybugs at the Dell but no aphids, so I hope they are getting enough to eat but not overwhelmed. If you see frayed petals, look closer for the caterpillar feasting in the folds. These are so easily removed by hand. Leaf miner and mildew continue to beset our Dell. I am using Spinosad, a bacterium concoction included in Captain Jack's Dead Bug and is pretty mild on the rest of your ecology.

Mildew is more problematic. In our foggy Bay Area we will ALWAYS have fungal spores floating around and happily crusting up our beauties.

Baking soda, milk and Stylet Oil will hold mild cases to a minimum if applied WEEKLY. However, if your situation deteriorates too really unhappy levels, you will have to resort to commercial anti-fungal agents found at your local garden

store. Strip all the affected leaves. Your poor dahlia will look so pathetic. Spritz her ONCE with a slightly dilute solution EVERY DAY for a week. Check to see that your new leaves are happily green. Then slowly spritz every other day until you are back on a once a week schedule. Devorah recommended Infuse, a systemic fungicide with propiconazol to Pat, which she ordered from Amazon. For really BIG GUNS, there's really expensive Eagle.





Rogue!

Be severe about wonky looking plants. Are they small, curly in an ugly not cute way? Stunted? Pull them out. Do NOT compost them. Trash them NOW. You can still replace them with one of your “insurance”

pots you’ve set aside just for this purpose. Or come to the Dell to get a couple; I have bunches still.

Double Check Your Labels

I love to walk my rows “taking attendance,” as Nicole calls it. I check the label against the actual bloom against what I have written down on my list. Especially after roguing, this updating is necessary. Rolling into show season, it’s also a good idea to get all the ADS numbers added to



your XL spreadsheet. It will save you so much time when you are filling out entry forms.

A Musing



The interns were so surprised to see so many changes from week to week—new plants sending up first blooms and more and more blooms on what has already been blooming a while. We mused that sometimes it's better when only a couple unfurl because we actually SEE that single flower;

sometimes when there are hundreds, we only notice color—lots of color—but not the intricate wonder that constitutes each dahlia. Hugs and Kisses surprised Adam with its petals being lavender on the upside and deep purple on the obverse. When he chose a Copper Boy to take home, I suggested he walk it around his windows to find the light which would flare the metallic gleam in its petals. Savor the amazing details in the face of glorious abundance.

Parties!!!

Now is the ideal time to throw a dahlia party. Help set up our show; Enter!!! Participate. Sequester a couple little vases of dahlias with a kind note to surprise strangers. Overwhelm yourself with beauty!

**Yours in dirt,
Deborah**









Congratulation to Allison for Best of Show at the Marin County Fair!





Photo Credits: Dietz, Dibner, FaSiOen, Gaensler, Kaiser

Meticulous Proofing: Steve

URL Magician: Mini

PS. We just received our first response to leaving dahlia bouquets to be found from Fremont.

“We came across this bouquet today in Fremont park and just wanted to say thank you! Our dog loves how they smell and they are a great touch to our living room.

Thank you for brightening our day and making people’s days brighter with your acts of kindness!”

