



Dahlia Society of California Newsletter



NEXT MEETING NOVICE ONLY MINI SHOW!!

Erik has contributed \$50 to sweeten the awards! Besides \$1.50 for first; \$1 for second and \$.50 for third, we will pay out \$10 each for Best Large, Best Small and Best Open Center; Best of Show will reap yet another \$20!!! Bring your contenders! September 9 at 7:30 at 9th and Lincoln. Please come early to stage your dahlias. We'd like to start the judging at 7:30. There will be a few extra containers for a first come first use opportunity. All forms plus x3 and x5. You may enter TWO per category but NO MORE. (Two AA, 2A, 2B, etc.) Let your post-show beauties dazzle our membership. . Please fill out an exhibit card per entry. These can be found on the website: <https://www.dahliadell.org/exhibitors-info-2025-show>
Who will bring goodies for





this wonderful event?
Bring cameras!!

SHOW PREP

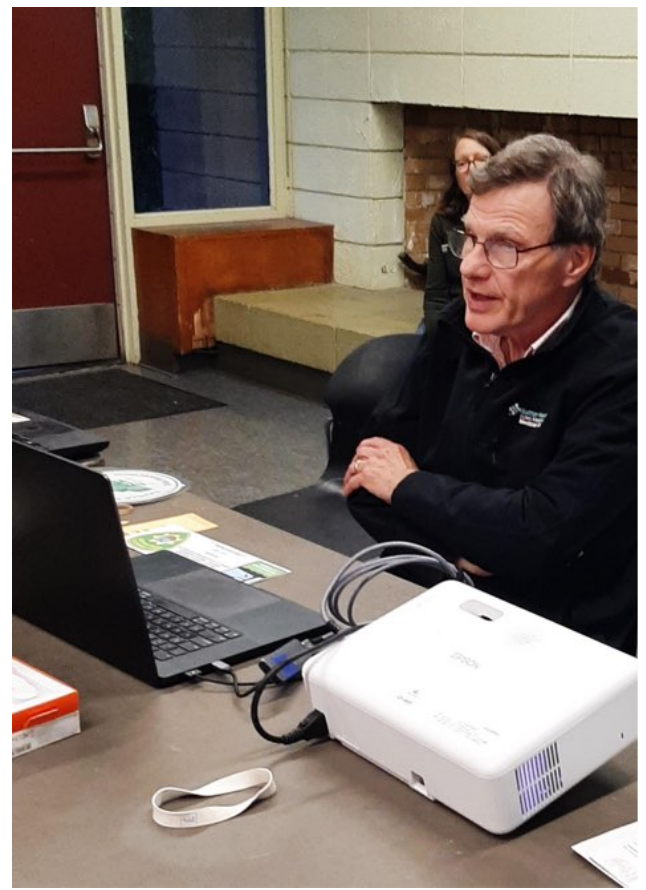
Erik outlined the timing of our 3 busy days and Deborah filled in the details by going over the show schedule especially clarifying **CLASS** and **SECTION**. Sarah walked everyone through where to find all the show forms. Sarah also debuted her amazing 8-page

booklet explaining **ALL THINGS DAHLIA SHOW!** Mini baled us out multiple times when our fingers exceed our technical prowess. Tim stunned us with an amazing Auggie White, grown on the Hillside at the Dell. Wow! It would a been a contendah!



GOODIES FOR GOOD GARDENERS

Yummy thanks go out to Alex and Allison for their walnut-chocolate cookies and to John and Annette for their Kona coffee shortcakes. Anita baked us a delicious plum cake which went splendidly with Brigid's ginger cookies. Oh Pat, those English cookies and toffee chips were too wonderful! Quadratic? Grace, Steve! And who brought two boxes of Andronico's best oatmeal cookies? Jeannie! Thanks to all of you for contributing to our dahlia community!



MONTEREY DINE AROUND

MBDS outdid themselves again. Sarah and I toured 4 private gardens with snacks, salads,



main courses and finally desserts: such a delicious itinerary. # 1. Brian and Kristine Albrecht's Farm just keeps getting better! Despite





picking 2000 stems twice a week, the garden seemed magnificently in full bloom. Designers like balls and formal decs, so only a couple waterlilies and NO open centered dahlias

appeared. Brian explained that of the 1000 seedlings planted each spring, Kristine sets herself a goal of eliminating 120 each week. Tough Love, indeed. Humongous Maki's and KA Kalessis elicited

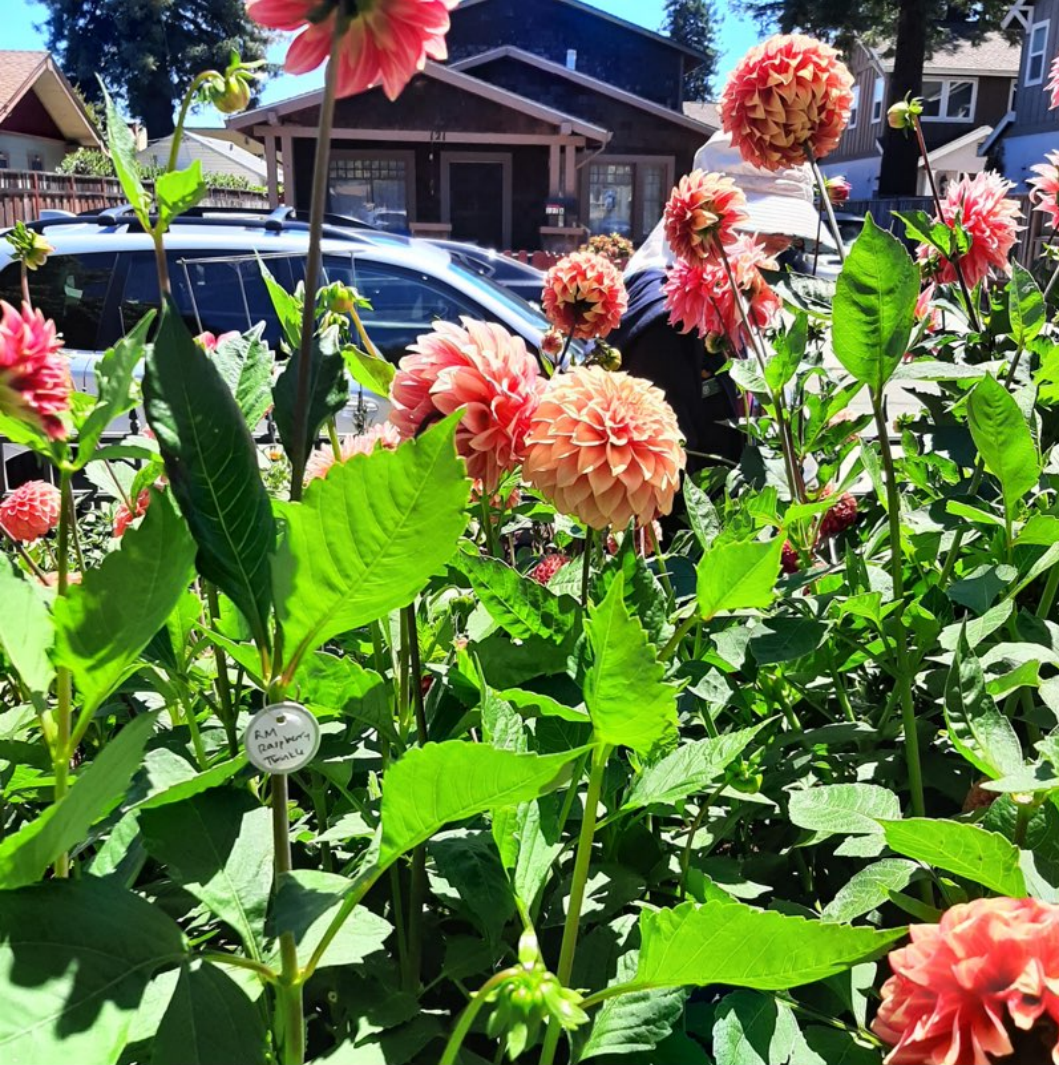




gasps. The homegrown cherry tomatoes popped sunshine goodness as we crunched them in our mouths. I could have crawled into a corner and eaten all the caramel sticky buns. #2. Dynamite Farms Markus Hutnak in the middle of a quiet neighborhood who would think from looking at Markus's outside that a whole You Pick farm

blossomed behind! Beautifully laid out with raspberry, blackberry and blueberry bushes interspersed with bee hives, the isles of raised bed dahlias lead us to the cutest chicken coop with 13 cooing hens. What a splendid bathroom overlooking its own garden! Sarah spotted a pink dahlia that shimmered as though sprinkled with pixie





dust. Many visitors bought honey and eggs. So many delicious fresh salads including toothpick shishkabobs of tomato, mozzarella and basil dripped in balsamic. And chocolates? Cacao is a vegetable or a fruit? right? So surely chocolate qualifies as a salad —my favorite salad. #3. Mike and Talisa What a charming Beach Victorian with

dahlias growing right to the sidewalk. With 5 bags of steer manure per raised bed, their dahlias look well fed. Check out the cute id tags. Lots of little nooks to dine on scrumptious roast beef and fresh lemonade.

#4. Alan Woertink and Jennifer Bruckner

Despite still remodeling the kitchen, the whole property welcomed us including the 3 distinct growing areas under 100 year old oak trees. Alan up cycled rebar and wood for dahlia





support cages. People gasped at the stalks on Blomquist Finlandia: like soldiers' thighs! Besides some monstrous AA's, there was a radiant Eden Lillian. Ah! desserts! Glorious finale to a wonderful day.

UPDATE FROM UP NORTH

John B writes,

"You may remember that we

started distributing weekly bouquets to homebound seniors at Luther Burbank last year. Word got around about the effort and there are now a plethora of regular

contributors such that we are able to also provide buckets of free flowers for the taking to the larger community at their regular Friday or Sunday markets. Dahlias pictured are Improved Orange Cushion, Black Beauty, Tempest, Karma Chocolate and River's Spikey Norm.



Hometown Hero

SUN SHINES ON DELL PICNIC

Although most of us were prepared with parkas and vests, the sun shone all day at our annual picnic! Such a difference from the drizzly days of July and sooo welcomed.



Jenna set up an information table along with Erik's cool triptych and Joe took in all forms of membership payment. She laid out sandwiches, salads and specified which tables would hold pot luck what. The secret to that fantastic cake? Straight from the chef: whiskey! Wow! Erik and Deborah alternated Walk n Talks, leading large clouds of people around our Dell and Hillside. One of the women who went on both tours said, "They were completely different, but really interesting." How nice to see

family members and people from other dahlia societies. After disbudding and deadheading with Jenn T for over an hour, Lucy finally sat down to lunch. "Great to relax with good people."



FLORIBUNDA!

And the crowds poured in! We had our best attendance ever!

Moreover, we had more involved volunteers engaging our public than ever before. Despite having fewer blooms than years past, the quality and presentation displayed our favorite flower splendidly! Nevertheless, we featured almost 1000 entries with over 2000 dahlias on display.



FRIDAY SET UP



Thank you to all who came to set up including the whole Tobiason family and their work-out friends. Bruiser Nicholas brought pals to heft tables. Jenn T and Lucy and rolled out tablecloths,

set out signage and class numbers. Jenna and Erik began the day picking beauties from Sisterhood Gardens and the Warden backyard. The Visual Team—Jenna, Marissa, Mini, Paul and Matt—created massive orange and pink walls of photo op spots all night long! Someone thoughtfully added a huge cement brick below the gorgeous dahlia wreath to enable shorter photo





models to shine. Throughout the days, Irene and Chelsea, young interns from the Dell, wielded visitors' cell phones to snap lasting memories. From 6:30 PM on, exhibitors arrived to stage their blooms. Because Frances and John specialize in micro dahlias, they built a unique plank to facilitate transport of their frail and

delicate wee gems. "Styrofoam. Can get Michael's. The vials are floral tube's." Heather J added pegboard to her car's rear door so she could plug in dowels to keep her big buckets in place during the long drive up from SLO. Very ingenious.



FUN ZONE

The back quarter of the Galleria housed our FUN ZONE. Anchored by our resident artist, Rachel

Perls, live-oil painting a super realistic red dahlia, we hosted a Petal Art area. Young and old could arrange dahlia petals, stems, and leaves into



interesting mosaics. Kids could color on blank paper or on outlined dahlia sheets (supplied by Julia!) Tucked into the far corner, Paul and Jeff, shared the wonders of their Orchid Society with ecumenical grace. Adding to the frivolity, Kauna set up a Photo Booth producing custom strips of 4 fun





pix a pop. Rounding out the **FUN ZONE** we displayed the most arrangements we've ever exhibited. And the most creative. How to incorporate fruit in a creation? Brigid transported lemons in a silver truck. The crowd



loved Sarah's Spaghetti and Dahlia Meatball creation; Jenna delivered a tall orange grove

with a beautifully balanced design. Because whole peppers or lemons would overwhelm some dahlias, Allison just displayed the tops and





made little wheels with blood orange slices. Clever. Tiny artichokes enhanced one



to portray Hech Inovatively, Sarah Snoho Storms into a ice cubes. Jenna triumphed and white dahlias. Arrangement stuck strawberries adding blips of red arrangement. So both our security show so much they entered his stunning tower. Utterly



arrangement. How Hecht Water? chucked lovely water dispenser like Capturing the gist, with hydrangeas Winning sweepstakes, Julie on skinny sticks to her Best of Show clever. Last year, guards enjoyed the joined DSC! Greg Sizzling Summer red striking!

JUDGING

Promptly at 9 judging teams began assessing 2000+ gorgeous dahlias. The overall quality of blooms often made this a tough job. Curtis turned the Bench Evaluation into a wonderful educational hands on exercise. John Morton brought three each of three new



introductions to be evaluated. While all achieved above the requisite 85, his frothy B LC Y triumphed as Best New Introduction, naming it JJ's

Elliot. Kristi again set up her electronic clerking with 4 navigators accompanying each judging team, 2 teams to catalog all wins, Taylor to photograph EVERY entry with a



colored dot, and Julie to RUN wherever glitches snagged or ambiguity reared its snotty head. Steve writes about his experience: Deborah asked me with plenty of advanced notice if I would

serve as a Navigator for the show and I agreed. Twice I missed the Zoom meetings where Kristi coached the new people and explained the new system of clerking! So Saturday morning, I was nervous as I started



out with my team of judges. A bit overwhelmed by the layout of the thorough book Kristi made, Guy quickly got me on track and it was smooth and fascinating sailing after that. I was astonished at how

much I learned from Kathy, Guy, and Ed. So many scenarios came up as they discussed, disagreed, called for outside opinions of senior judges, had ties broken, and we made our way through the crowds. I flashed back decades to when I tried Judging School and couldn't stay awake in





be an apprentice judge. Now I appreciate that judgment and

the second session, doodling instead of listening! Endless rules and criteria, I felt. But now that I know more, I look forward to taking the next steps online, imagining that someday I might



criticism don't have to take away the gut reaction to beautiful dahlias!

At our show, I was knocked out over and over by the beauty of the blooms, and some of the most memorable images are already burned into my brain like Lou's 13 Porcelains and 7 Sunday Steves. On Sunday I had a blast taking pictures, and talking about dots and attitude." Thank you, Steve.



WINNERS AND MORE WINNERS!

Congratulations to Cathy Bettencourt for her yellow Miniball which won Best Small and then succeeded over Lou's Best Large Kenora Jubilee and the Kawaguchi's Best Open, Kelsey Radiance to be crowned BEST IN SHOW! Open Sweepstakes was garnered by the Soderstroms; Amateur Sweeps compiled by Lou P; and Novice Sweepstakes accrued by the Francis and John K. Julie Lanese amassed Arrangement Sweeps. Young Levi's Skip to My Lou, nabbed





Best Jr. Bloom. When Levie was only 4, Levie loved Skip to My Lou. He insisted that they grow it. When he visited the Dahlia Dell, he could already identify several cultivars by name. Congratulations, Levie! Whew! Heather Jamison's huge Aggie White and Lou's Sunday Steve were standouts on the Court of Honor. Two days before our show, Matthew, first-time grower, called Deborah with a problem. He had a whole

bush of spectacular Blomquist Birdnest and a vase with a big enough frog for just one dahlia; should he just leave the others at home? After checking out the photograph he texted her, Deborah responded, " NO! We'll find something for your big bruisers." Matt's magnificent x5 anchored our awards table as Best Large 5! Quite a feat for Matt's first time showing dahlias. Iris took home bragging rights for Largest Dahlia in the World with a monster 13 1/2" Emory





Paul. Kristie nabbed Best 5 Colors and Best Almand with a spectacular Show n Tell. Deborah sparkled with Best Eden Alice and Best BiColor, Jessica. For a list of winners, check the

dahlia.dell.org website. Those beautiful ribbons that festooned the black table originally came crammed in a small box; Jenna ironed every single one before draping them as awards. Julie triumphed with Best Photo.



NEW AND COOL

Maldini was Brigid's first dahlia, bought at Costco, which lured her ever deeper into the dahlia cult. Like something from a 17th century painting, its orange and white streaks still beguile. Iris's x5 Nicky was named for her piano playing son who loves purple; her



x3 orange Blenny caught many



**an eye as did her Ruthli x5. John
Morton's Hollyhill DPT scintillated**



**dark red whilst his RNX Proud
fascinated. Sodorstrom's Rivers
Watermelon earned orange. Just
what is Heather's second year
seedling? A water lily or a drawing
in orange capuchino? Is a centaur
a horse or a
man? Very
coool.
Great x7 from
Lou P's
firecracker
second year.
And what is
this? A wee
colorette that
photographs
like a painting?**



MEMBERSHIP TABLE

For hours, marathoner Don reeled them in and Maggie signed them up! So many great embodiments of why to join our dahlia society! Nicole chatted up



the younger crowd. Erik, Peggy, and Mini all took turns behind the

giant tuber clump explaining the underground mysteries of dahlia roots. Erik's educational triptych stopped many passers by. Those desiring further information were given Sarah's 8-page "Bible," a compendium of show details. A visitor mentioned that she's been on line to buy up vintage dahlia sweatshirts that exactly matched the one Erik was wearing! Jerrod earned his Membership table chair by helping out at **EVERYTHING** asked of him for the entire weekend.



SUNDAY

Lou awarded prize\$ to 36 different winners! That's a new record. He awarded Deborah the Washington State Silver medal and



blew her away with the announcement, “And the People’s Choice award goes to Kelgai Ann, exhibited by Deborah Dietz.” Usually the hoi polloi chooses the big flamboyant stunners like My Hero or the scarlet piccote on SLO Sweetheart; but this show they succumbed to the quite nacreous perfection of Kelgai Ann. With the last check handed out, pandemonium ensued. What took hours and hours to distribute on tables took a half an hour to gather containers, dump water, dry and wrap vases. Meanwhile, Rachel Perls collected still-fresh winners for the NICU (neonatal intensive care) while Julia collected so many

buckets of dahlias to take to UCSF. On Monday, Julia delivered 39 bouquets from “The Dahlia Society of California.” The families Tobiasen and Gaensler not



only collapsed tables but also swept out the empty Galleria.





MILL VALLEY GROWERS
 Katey sent in pix of her visit with Anita at the middle school's dahlia yard. Anita gets BIG blooms in her gro-bags!

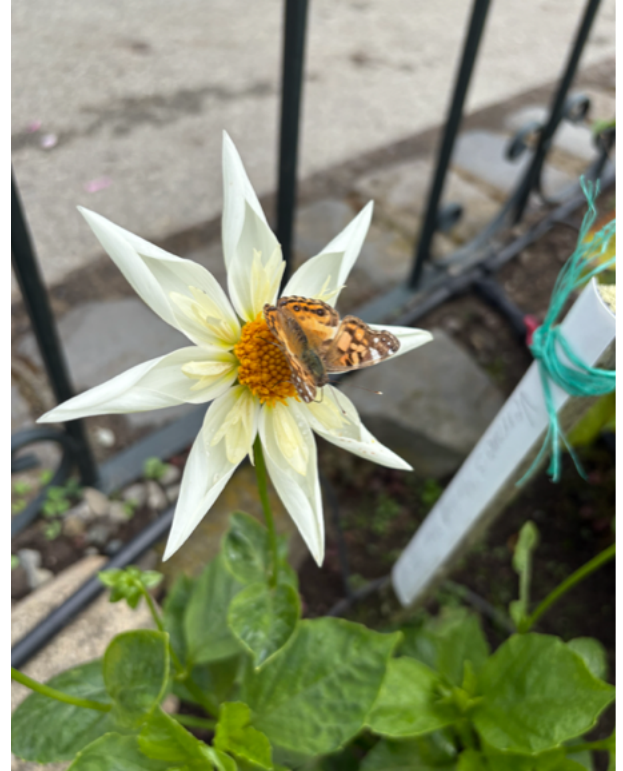
HAPPY HILLSIDERS AND BUSY TEAR DROPPERS

Sarah's section continues to spew forth amazing blooms. Sue's half of the hill is fully in spate; visitors love her clear labels. Sarah caught an entire quince anos photo session. Tim's upper tier of seedlings surprise us daily. Tim loves to come clip a whopping big Augie White to take to the Science Academy front desk. Lou's half of the tear drop is perfectly primed for show time. Check out his plump Eden Sunday Steves and his whole row of For Robins. Tinnee and Jerry have achieved neigh





perfection; gorgeous leaves, marry a weed and utterly stunning magnificent! blooms. Deborah section has enjoyed ministrations of her young



interns. “Carry this Copper Boy around your house from window to window until you see the metallic glint,” Deborah suggested to Adam. Dauntless Nicole has been transplanting some of our bigger potted dahlias to the rows. She’s fearless and fine fingered; she pulls tough jobs off

without concern. Our young volunteers always enjoy the choosing of the take home dead heads. When Steve is not our ambassador plenipotentiary, he's digging compost holes and wrestling resisting hoses. He writes, "I LOVE TALKING TO THE PUBLIC AT THE DELL. THERE'S BEAUTIFUL DIVERSITY ON BOTH SIDES OF THE FENCE! LAST MONTH, A NATTY COUPLE WITH A SMALL BIRD (ALSO DRESSED UP STYLISHLY)



POSED HER ON THE FENCE FOR A PHOTO OP. TURNS OUT SHE'S ON INSTAGRAM AND CAN BE SEEN ALL OVER THE WORLD. I RELISH THE STORIES I HEAR FROM LOCALS AND VISITORS ALIKE, AND WANTED TO SHARE TWO SPECIAL ONES:

A MULTI-GENERATIONAL FAMILY GROUP WAS ADMIRING THE HILLSIDE AND WHEN THEY STOPPED AT DEBORAH'S SECTION, I HEARD SOME EUROPEAN ACCENT AND JUMPED INTO CONVERSATION. WITHIN A COUPLE OF MINUTES, DEGREES OF SEPARATION DISAPPEARED AND IT BECAME CLEAR: SARA SMITH HAD BEEN ADORED AS THE THIRD GRADE TEACHER OF THE FIRST TWO CHILDREN OF THIS BEAUTIFUL AND AMAZING HUNGARIAN-ITALIAN FAMILY!



ONE DAY, A MAN CAME UP TO ME AND STARTED TELLING A POIGNANT AND TOUCHING DAHLIA STORY. I GOT HIM TO PAUSE, HANDED HIM MY TELEPHONE SO HE COULD DICTATE, AND THIS IS WHAT HE SAID: "I JUST WANTED TO THANK THOSE OF YOU WHO WORK ON THE GARDEN BECAUSE WHEN MY SISTER DIED I WAS GRIEVING A LOT AND I

FOUND GREAT SOLACE COMING TO VISIT THE DAHLIA DELL AND JUST THINKING ABOUT HOW SHE WAS A FLOWER IN MY LIFE AND BEAUTIFUL LIKE THESE THAT YOU GUYS PROVIDE. I ALSO WANT TO MENTION THAT I'M A PART OF INDIVISIBLE SF AND I ANNOUNCED AT OUR MONTHLY MEETING LAST WEEK THAT IF YOU'RE FEELING BURNED OUT FROM FIGHTING OR ALL THE NEWS, JUST GO AND





VISIT THE DAHLIAS FOR FOUR REJUVENATION.”

A recent 100-person strong walking tour passed their

microphone to Deborah for a quick loop around the tear drop learning about



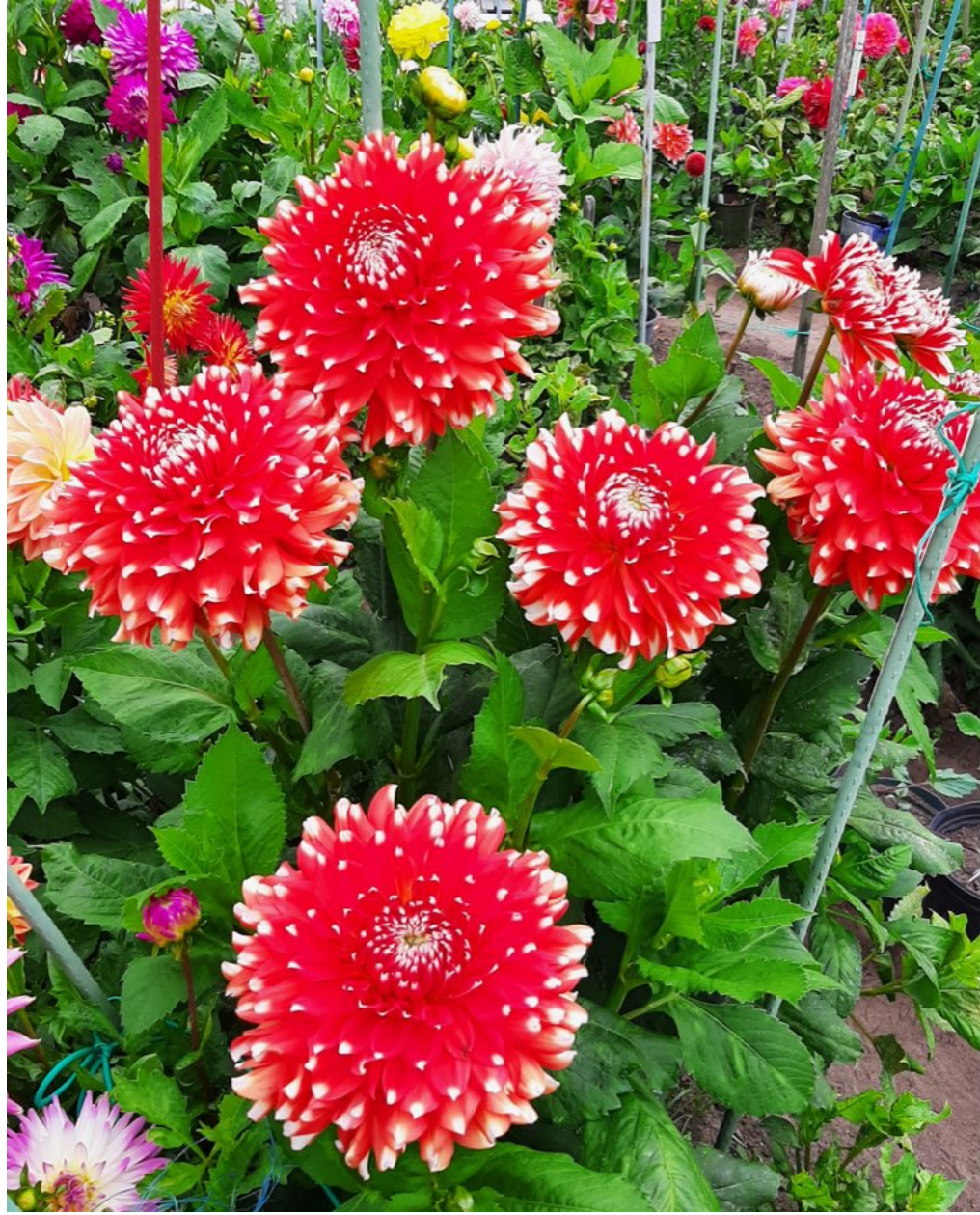
genetics, history and prolonging vase life. Love was definitely in the air, as many of us witnessed a marriage proposal, bended knee preferred ring, flustered female: she said yes! Everyone near the dahlias clapped happily. We’re so happy to welcome back artist Kevin Woodson visiting for a month to capture dahlias in his inimitable watercolors. Check out Sue’s Asahi Chohji, Japanese for rising sun and in our dahlia registers since the 1880’s! Her Eden Tie Die dances on the wind.

SUMPTUOUS SEPTEMBER

The bounty of early September is almost overwhelming. I feel I

should pitch my sleeping bag in one of the isles of the garden and just sleep, disbud and deadhead. And then suddenly our dahlias realize that there's waning light and begin blooming with open centers and spindlier stems. Now is the time to cut back to thriving new growth. We still have all through October to keep great dahlia production with judicious cutting back to vigorous growth.

Rogue and Label





Remove any cruddy looking dahlias. Throw them in the garbage not the compost. Recheck your labels against the book or Google. I write pencil notes on my venetian blind slats: 5' tall, give more space, donate to DSC, several wolf petals, etc. Do NOT

fertilize any more. Old dahlia hands claim late season fertilization makes for weaker tubers. Be more judicious about watering: do your dahlias really NEED water today? They will probably go longer between waterings. If you grow more than one clump of the same variety, clearly mark which is the BEST.

Cocktail du Jour
Right now my biggest problem



Ken Wu

is mildew. Mildew has relished our drizzly summer. Grrr. So my cocktail includes baking soda, milk, Stylet Oil and now a commercial fungicide from one of the big box stores. I am pulling a lot of leaves off if they are drastically infected. Sigh.

Party Hearty

After the stress of the shows is foreby, throw a party. Invite people over to luxuriate in the beauty. Share the bounty with your community. My local library loves my Tuesday and Saturday deliveries. Dahlias make everything better.

Yours in dirt,
Deborah





PETAL ART

- 1.) Arrange petals in patterns, shapes
- 2.) Have parent take pics.
- 3.) Leave petals for next artist!





Winners of Eden Introduction Namers



Sunday Seminar with Sensei Lou



Photo Credits: Dietz, Dibner, Gaensler, Hunter, Kaiser, Korischenko, Kurhan, Leinger, Mellon, Moore, Shepard, SmithSmiTanlimco, Tobiasson, Wallace, Woodson, Wu



URL Magician: Mini

