

Portland Dahlia Society Bulletin

Meets 2nd Tuesday Monthly at Oaks Park Dance Pavilion, 7805 SE Oaks Park Way, Portland 97202

Website: portlanddahlia.com

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Next meeting Tuesday, March 10th, 2020 @ 7:00 p.m.

CALLING ALL TUBERS

Please bring the tubers you plan to donate to our annual fundraisers to the March meeting. Please be sure each tuber is clean, free of rot and has a viable eye. You do not need to write on each tuber, as long as it is clearly marked in some way. More than one tuber of a variety may be put in a bag with the name written on the outside of the bag. In preparation for our annual sales, two workshops will be held at Swan Island Dahlias. The first will be on **Sunday**, April 5th, and the second on **Sunday**, April 26th. The second one will be to prepare tubers for the Master Gardener's Sale. Starting time for both workshops is 1:00 PM. Please help out at one or both if you can. We need your tubers and assistance. Also please see Shirley to volunteer to help set up the sales area for the April Sale and Auction.



Clearview Saffron B SC LB Or/Y

SILENT AUCTION

If you have tubers of *newer* varieties that are ready to be auctioned, we will be using the silent auction format in March. The donors have the right to set what they consider to be a fair minimum or reserve bid. If there are no bids above the minimum, the donor takes his donation back home. The Board feels that we may get a better

price if we do some selling prior to our main event and some of those who take cuttings would like to get them sooner. This will be limited to newer varieties, or those that are very hard to find.

COOKIES FOR MARCH

Jeanette Benson and Larry Smith will be bringing treats.

PROGRAM UPDATE FOR MARCH

The seedling mix ordered at the most recent meeting will be available.

We will have a hands on demonstration of propagation by cuttings directly before the start of the meeting.

Calling all who have dahlia seed! In an effort to challenge dahlia growers to try growing dahlias from seed (who knows what you will get?!), we are asking that you donate some seed to be distributed to members at the March 10th meeting. There will be an opportunity to bring in the dahlias grown from this seed to the October 13th meeting. Thanks in advance for your generosity.

If members are not certain about some of their tubers' true identification, they are encouraged to put them in an 'Unknown' pile. The club will still sell them at the tuber sale in April, but at a reduced price. "Mystery Dahlia"

We will vote at our March meeting a by-laws change: Article IV, Section 3 Terms of office is currently 2 years (except Treasurer). No elective officer shall serve in the same office for more than 2 successive years... The Board of Directors approved the following changes: Delegates and alternatives may serve 2 consecutive terms (4 years).

The complete By-Laws are in the Portland Dahlia Society Roster.

Anyone who wishes to serve on the By-Laws committee or Tuber packing party contact Nan Hage.

The other motion referred at our Jan. Board Meeting: Purchase a card reader for our sales; require a \$10 minimum purchase.

Tuber cost will increase from \$3 to \$4 each and specialty tubers \$6 each.

At the packing party, helpers now can purchase up to 5 \$4 tubers.

Tubers at the May meeting will sell for \$2 each the entire evening.

Packing parties happen @ Swan Island Dahlia @ 1 PM Sundays, April 5 and 26.

Let Shirley Bankston know which of your donated dahlias need tags ASAP.

DAHLIAS OF TODAY

Hot off the press. Shirley will have available at the membership table copies of 2020 Dahlias of Today for \$15 per copy. This is the annual publication of the Puget Sound Dahlia Association with lots of color photos of dahlias you must have along with great articles by dahlia specialists. DOT features new dahlia introductions that include our very own hybridizers: Allen Manuel, Ted Kennedy, Wayne Lobaugh, Eric Toedtli and Swan Island Dahlias. Experts have included articles full of great information about raising dahlias along with beautiful pictures of the trial garden winners. If your bloom went to the head table at the 2019 shows, your name is in the book, too! Also available are 2020 Classification Books at \$5 each and Composite Books at \$10 each.

2020 DUES ARE DUE

If you haven't already paid, dues are past due. Judges please remember that you are required to carry membership in both the American Dahlia society and the PNDC (Pacific Northwest Dahlia conference). PDS dues, ADS dues and PNDC dues should be combined and paid to the Treasurer as noted below. Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers dues are \$10 and also payable through our Treasurer.

PDS	ADS	PNDC
Adults: \$7.00	Individual: \$24.00	Individual \$10.00
Couples: \$10.00	Family: \$27.00	Dual: \$15.00
Juniors: \$1.00		
Mail to or pay at next meeting		
Larry Sawyer, 11015 S.W. Berkshire, Portland, OR 97225		

MARCH CHECKLIST

How are those tubers doing in storage? Regardless of your storage medium and method, it is advisable to see how things are storing. Sometimes rot or insects (springtails or fungus gnats) can spread from one tuber to the next. Remove the rotted portion of the tubers and treat the cuts with powdered cinnamon, captan or sulfur. Many growers believe that a rotting tuber gives off ethylene gas which promotes premature sprouting in the other tubers in the same bag. While checking the tubers you may want to select some varieties for cuttings. I don't have the space to take all the cuttings I want at once. Therefore, some tubers are rotated back into storage and others come out to take still more cuttings.

While going through your stored tubers please take time to set aside tubers for our Auction and Sales. We need everyone's support to insure the success of our annual fundraisers. Including a list of varieties and respective quantities is helpful to the volunteers who will be doing the packaging at the workshops.

March is a good time to get a soil test and find out what your ground lacks or perhaps has too much of a given element. Most soils in the PNW tend to be on the acid side. Applying lime, either regular calcium carbonate or dolomite, will help bring your soil back to neutral. This aids in the plants ability to photosynthesize and process soil nutrients. John Menzel once told me he thought the reason Australian growers had fewer problems wintering "hard to keep varieties" is because the Australian soils are naturally more alkaline. Most soil tests require at least a cup and a half of soil collected in a zip lock bag. It is advisable to take this sample from several different places in your garden to get an accurate representative sample. Try to keep the sample as sterile as possible by using very clean implements and wearing latex gloves.



Clearview Sarah BB-SC-White

PNDC MEETING COMES TO THE OREGON GARDEN!

The annual PNDC meeting will be held on Saturday, March 28 at the Oregon Garden Resort in Silverton, Oregon. Your Leadership Team has worked diligently to make this an interesting and educational day that you won't want to miss.

The Oregon Garden, located at 879 W. Main St. Silverton, is an 80-acre botanical garden, featuring more than 20 specialty gardens showcasing the diverse botanical beauty that can be found in the Willamette Valley and throughout the Pacific Northwest. More information regarding this special place can be found at: www.oregongarden.org

The Executive Meeting (officers and society reps) will begin at 10 a.m., followed by the General Membership Meeting at 11 a.m. Lunch will be served at noon (see attachment for details).

After lunch, we will have an auction to raise funds for PNDC activities. **We are looking for donations of newer and in demand varieties to sell.** Just prior to the auction, there will be short presentation featuring the latest information on virus research and control by ADS Research Committee member, Linda Taylor.

The educational program will begin at approximately 2 p.m. ADS 1st Vice President Mark Oldenkamp will give a demo on dahlia propagation/taking cuttings. ADS President Brad Freeman and ADS New Society Coordinator will provide a power point presentation, "What's New in ADS" and will touch on topics of use to ADS judges and members.

This program will count as a refresher course for judges. All judges are required to attend a training every other year, so if you are a judge who hasn't has a refresher in recent years, this is an excellent chance to keep your accreditation requirements up to date and/or to work toward promotion to the next level.

Those interested only in the auction and/or program may join us for the afternoon session and are welcome to join us for lunch.

PNDC MEETING LUNCH RESERVATIONS

We need to give the Oregon Garden Resort a count as to the number of guests who will be ordering lunch from them during our March 29 meeting.

The menu will consist of:

Pasta buffet with penne pasta
marinara sauce
chicken
Caesar salad
garlic bread
hot or iced tea/regular or decaffeinated coffee
brownies

The cost per person will be \$20 flat fee, gratuity included. Payment will be collected on the meeting day, March 29. *Please participate, pricing is based on a minimum of 20 meals, PNDC will incur an additional cost of \$3 per person if we don't reach that minimum.*

Oregon Garden requires the final count at least 10 days prior to the event, **so let us know if you would like to order the meal no later than Tuesday, March 17.**

****Additional meals added within 72 hours of the event will be subject to availability and will incur an additional \$6 fee per meal.*

To place your order, contact Larry Smith:

email: thebodysmith@hotmail.com

phone: 503 777-1857 (land line)

TUBER SALE FLYER

Included in this mailing is a flyer for our sale and auction April 14th. If each of us could place (with permission) the flyer or copies thereof in our area stores, community bulletin boards, health clubs, garden centers, places of employment or any other place interested parties could take notice; this would help with the success of our sale.



*My Forever – Derrill Hart Winner
From Swan Island Dahlias*

STARTING TUBERS INDOORS

Many growers prefer to start their tubers indoors ahead of planting time. This gives the plants a head start and results in earlier flowers in the garden. An added bonus is that there are extra sprouts available for taking cuttings and thus having additional stock for planting, trading or making pot roots.

Many growers have a set up of stacked plastic or wire rack shelving in their basement or spare room. Suspended above the shelves are fluorescent light fixtures. The multiple shelf set up yields some bottom heat from the light fixture on the lower shelf. Regular shop lights work just fine. There is no advantage to using the more expensive "grow" lights. I leave my set up on 12 hours a day and the plants grow just fine.

How soon should we start the tubers in pots indoors? Most growers think that four to six weeks is just about right. If you were planting mid to late May, starting your

tubers about the first of April would yield 8" plants to set out at planting time.

If you want to experiment on a smaller scale, you can start just a few plants on a sunny window sill. Or better yet put a few pots out on a sunny patio or deck and bring them in on a nightly basis.

As the plants increase in growth, you may want to begin hardening some of the plants off. This involves leaving them outside in a sunny, yet protected area. I have a south facing deck that works great. By late April or early May they can be left out all day and night. Be watchful of a late frost and be prepared to move inside at night if necessary.



*Kelsey Spirit – Gullikson Medal Winner
Photo by Colin Walker*

DAHLIA QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS BY TED J. KENNEDY

What is the number one pest of dahlias?

In our wet climate, our biggest pest problem is slugs and to a smaller extent snails. It is very common for slugs to eat all of the sprouts emerging from the soil and the dahlia tuber may never recover. If you till your soil while it is too wet and create dirt clods, the slugs will crawl into the spaces between the clods and remain there eating dahlia sprouts. There are two product types that people use to control slugs and one is somewhat organic called Sluggo or other products using iron phosphate. The active ingredient, iron phosphate is not poisonous to human or animals and it even used to be sold in health food stores as a supplement. However, there is some controversy over the product as they have added a chemical called EDTA to enhance the effects of the iron phosphate. The other, old fashioned products are slug bait pellets, meal and liquid that are metaldehyde based. I am not an advocate of the pellets or

meal but do use the liquid products (one is called Deadline) in my garden. Using the liquid sparingly by placing a thin line of the product around the dahlia plant will protect it from slug damage for a week or two. Once dahlias are up to about 12 inches tall, slugs do not seem to be a problem any longer. There are hundreds of other ways to control slugs but in my experience none of them are as effective as the two products above.

What is the biggest fertilizer related problem affecting dahlias?

Besides the obvious answer that dahlias need some fertilizer to grow, here in our area the biggest problem is acid soils. Dahlias grow best in slightly acid soils and the ideal pH is 6.3 although they do very well in a range from 6.0 to 6.5. Our native soils tend to be about 6.0 in pH and that is fine for dahlias. However, as you grow plants in your garden and fertilize the plants, the soil will become more acid. After a few years the acid will build up and the dahlia plants will not be able to take up the fertilizer easily and many people will increase the amount of fertilizer. With the increase of fertilizer the soil will become even more acid until dahlias do very poorly there no matter how much fertilizer is applied.

The answer to the acid problem is to check the soil pH with a pH meter (our club has one you can borrow) and if it is not in the proper range, to add lime to your soil. Lime is an organic product and is ground limestone (the Rocky Mountains are mostly limestone). Lime can be applied in early spring and the newer "prilled" lime products can be applied with your fertilizer spreader. Many commercial growers add some lime to their gardens every year. By the way, if you know your garden is deficient in magnesium (that is most of us), you can use dolomite lime that adds magnesium and corrects the pH too.



Maks Big Tom A SC Yellow