

THE DAHLIA DIRT



The Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Dahlia Society

March 2013

Next Meeting:

Friday, March 8 at Simpkins Swim Center, Santa Cruz

7:00 Pot Luck Dinner

7:30 Meeting

Program: Slide show of the 2012 National Show presented by Barry Hart from San Leandro. A discussion on a proposed trial garden in San Jose and our tuber sale on April 6th. We are planning three 15 min. mini breakout sessions you can choose from. Iris will speak on tuber prep and pre-sprouting, Kevin will talk about early bugs in the patch and what to do about them and Kristine will speak on hoop house and garden warming tunnels.



From the Prez....



Opening up the stored tubers.



Sprouting tubers in the cutting bed.

I love starting dahlias in the winter and one way I jump start my growing season is a cutting bed. My bed is two by four feet with a heating cable, overhead grow lights, sand and potting soil. Sixty tubers or pot roots fit this space. The tubers or pot roots are planted shallow with the crowns showing so the first sign of a sprout can be detected and easily cut. I started in early February and now have over 80 tiny plants. I purchased some of my pot roots from Les and Viv Connel's Dahlias. I also made my own pot roots by growing cuttings or tubers in four inch pots last season which encouraged a small tuber mass.





Hoop house constructed with PVC pipe and covered with Agribon.



Seedlings potted up into 4" pots.

Even though the tubers are tiny, each one still produces many sprouts that are cut off, dipped in a rooting solution, and planted in dixie cups filled with wet play sand. The cuttings must be kept warm, have overhead lights, and misted with water every day. Within a month or so roots develop and the growing begins. I then transplant them into four inch pots and put them in my outdoor hoop house. When Spring arrives, I plant them in my dahlia patch under an Agribon hoop tunnel to keep them warm and toasty until the weather heats up.

We have a full agenda for the meeting on Friday.

We will start with a short slide show of the 2012 National Show presented by Barry Hart from San Leandro. We will also have a discussion on a proposed trial garden in San Jose, and our tuber sale on April 6th and more.

We are planning three 15 min. mini breakout sessions you can choose from. Iris will speak on tuber prep and pre-sprouting this time of the year. Kevin will talk about early bugs in the patch and what to do about them. I will speak on hoop house and garden warming tunnels.

It's such a exciting time or year and so full of potential.

Happy growing...Kristine

Minutes from the MBDS Meeting



Minutes from MBDS meeting on February 8th, 2013

Kevin Larkin called the meeting to order at 7:30pm. Number of members present = 20.

Doris brought David as a guest and Haley who came last month came again and joined as a new member. Welcome Haley!

Minutes: Motion was made to approve the January minutes as written in the February newsletter. Motion was approved. Iris thanked Patricia Santana for filling in as secretary last month!

Treasury: Katy has paid for our room at Simpkins for the year and she also purchased postage stamps before the price increase.

Membership: Jean was absent and there was no new information.

Tuber Sale: Our annual tuber sale is set for April 6th at Deer Park Shopping center upper level. Members should arrive around 7AM to help with setup. The more hands the easier it goes. Sale opens to the public at 9AM. Members who would like to purchase tubers before hand will need to come to the tuber sort at Kevin's barn in Corralitos which happens on Wed, Thurs and Friday prior to the sale from noon until 4pm. Prices will be the same: \$3 and \$5 depending on tuber size or if it's a plant. Also for every 10 tubers that are donated to the sale, the member will receive 1 tuber in exchange.

ProBuild and Farmers Market: MBDS will give a dahlia talk at ProBuild on April 10th (tentative) and we will also sell left over dahlia tubers at the Aptos Farmer's Market on April 13th.

Pacific Southwest Dahlia Conference: This coming up February 16th and 17th held near the marina in San Leandro.

MBDS Show: Kevin will not be here do to scheduling conflict with the National ADS show. Becky suggested starting a committee to get coached on what we need to take care of in his absence. It was also suggested that we keep our show on the weekend prior to Labor Day like last year in order to be more consistent from year to year. Next years National Show is in Washington State and we will have members traveling for that show on Labor Day weekend. Kevin will talk with Soquel High school to see if we can use the space the earlier week end again.

Culture: Think about "warming" up your tubers prior to the sale so that they can start showing their eyes.

Kevin spent the rest of the meeting sharing his knowledge on sprouting dahlia seeds. He brought in and shared samples of seeds he already sprouted on a moist paper towel. Ask a member if you have questions about the process to creating your own original bloom.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30PM

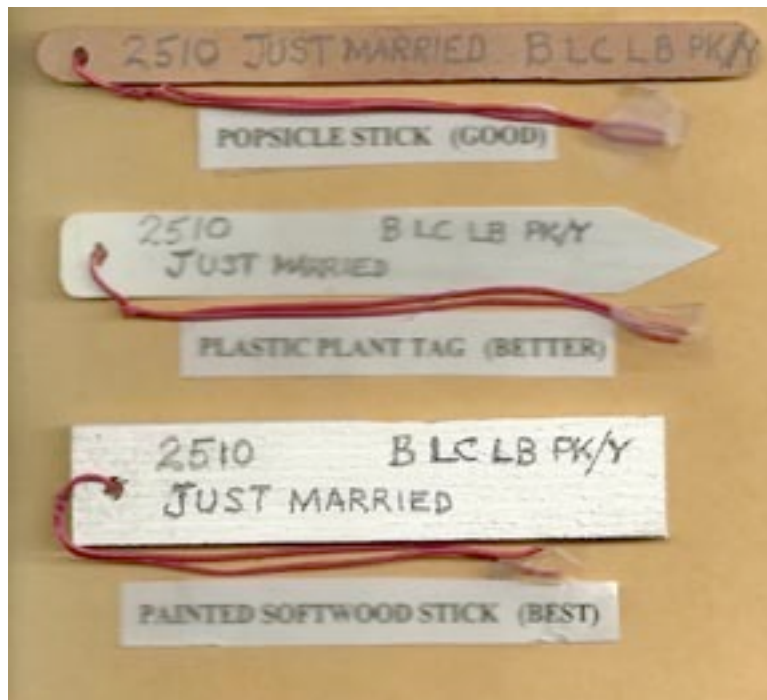
Minutes respectfully submitted, Iris Wallace

A Word From Dean Barnes

DAHLIA PLANT NAME TAGS

Every dahlia society member must believe that it is important to somehow know and keep track of the cultivar (variety) name of each plant in their garden. The generally accepted way is to use a name tag for individual plants or a closely associated group of like plants. The name tag can be wood, metal or plastic. You can buy wooden popsicle sticks or tongue depressors and drill a hole for a tie wire. The homemade wooden stick, painted white and with a tie wire is preferable for several reasons. It is easy to print all the information that you want on it with a pencil, the print stays legible all season, the tag can be tied to the dug root clump and after cutting, to a bag or box used for storing tubers of that variety.

If you are going to make a name tag print some useful information, other than cultivar name, on it. When cutting blooms for a show, the class number becomes very important and it will be available without search if on the tag. You can feel very wise when a visitor to your garden asks “what is this one?” and you can see the name and classification code on the tag. Also, it is handy information when handling tubers in and out of storage. A softlead pencil was used to print on all of the tags shown as examples.





Future Dates

March 8	MBDS Meeting and Pot Luck
April 6	Tuber Sale
April 7	Mills Garden Tour (tentative)
April 10	Pro Build Dahlia Demonstration
April 12	MBDS Meeting and Pot Luck
April 13	Cabrillo Farmer's Market Tuber Sale
August 31-	
September 1	Annual Dahlia Show

The Crew

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