



Vancouver Dahlia Society

Promoting Dahlia Growing Since 1955

February 2016

Bulletin No. 1

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello again! I have reluctantly agreed to serve as president for another year as no one came forward to take my place. The best case scenario for the coming year would be if someone would come forward to serve as vice-president. They would be included in all the planning and decisions and then would be more comfortable stepping into the position of president next year.

How did your dahlia seeds grow for you last year? I gave out a lot of seeds but have had very little feedback. Were they successful or did they fail? Please email me at peterkrueger53@hotmail.com to let me know what happened. Should we keep on handing out seeds? This year I will not have any seeds to share so it will be up to others to step up.

Have you tried starting plants from cuttings? Every year we have a demonstration on how to take cuttings but have had little feedback as to the success or failure of this venture for the members. If you have tried it and have failed (very possible as I have had more failure than success) or if you have been successful (other than Carole or Jennifer), let me know.

This year, consider taking part in the tuber sale. It is only one day so it does not require as much of a commitment as in the past. Complete instructions will be given in the next newsletter. Some of our members are "aging out" so new sellers will be welcome. Any executive member will be happy to help but the "experts" are the tuber sale committee: Carole, Tina and Norm.

We have had a bit of a break from growing dahlias but it is time to start thinking about starting up again. Be sure to check your stored tubers to remove any rotten ones and to make sure they are not drying out too much. It has been a very warm winter so planting time may be earlier this year. Rather than saying we should wait until May to plant (tubers need warm, dry soil to grow), it is better to wait for the lilac to bloom. That will be an indication that conditions are right for planting. Of course, if you want to give your tubers a head start, you can put them in pots indoors or in the greenhouse about 3 or 4 weeks earlier.

Peter Krueger

Next Meetings: February 17 and March 16

The VDS meets on the 3rd Wednesday of every month, except November, December and January in the Floral Hall at VanDusen Botanical Gardens at 7:30 pm.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 19
Federation Spring Workshop
Mt. Vernon, WA

April 9 (One Day Only)
Vancouver Dahlia Society
Tuber Sale

April 16
Fraser Valley Dahlia Society
Tuber Sale

July 23
Federation Summer Workshop
Seattle , WA

July 30
Judges Training
Mt. Vernon Washington

September 3 & 4
Vancouver Dahlia Society
Annual Dahlia Show

September 10 & 11
Whatcom County Dahlia Society
Annual Dahlia Show

September 17 & 18
Fraser Valley Dahlia Society
Annual Show

FEBRUARY MEETING AGENDA:

Waking up your tubers. Question and answer period.
Reviewing the recent membership survey.

UPCOMING TUBER SALE

The 2016 Tuber Price List will be ready for the February Meeting, you can also have it emailed to you upon request, contact Norm Sharp.

If you have never sold tubers at our sale and would like to, see Norm Sharp or Tina McNabb to get your seller's number. Full details on the tuber sale will be published in the Tuber Sale March Bulletin.

We are still looking for photos for the picture boards at our sale. If you have any please email them to Tina McNabb at themcnabbs@telus.net or put them on a DVD. They can be submitted up until a week before the sale.

DAHLIAS OF TODAY BOOKS

Tina McNabb will be taking orders for the 2016 Dahlias of Today. The cost this year will be \$10.00 US. If you have american money you can pay with it will save a lot of hassle converting it.

Welcome to new members:

Mary Anne Hernandez
Giesla Kuban
Mark Salopek
Siné Saunders
Dale Barby
Mr10
Erika Wiebe

FRASER VALLEY DAHLIA SOCIETY MEETINGS

Any VDS members who attend the FVDS meetings please note that their time and venue have been changed.

The meetings will be held at:
Trinity Memorial Church
33737 George Ferguson Way
Abbotsford
and start time will be 7:00 pm

Have You Paid Your 2016 Membership Dues?

Don't forget to renew your membership this month if you want to continue receiving this Bulletin. Also you'll need it to attend the "Member's Only" portion of our Annual Tuber Sale. You won't want to miss out on that!

A DAHLIA WEDDING

Last summer I grew some very special dahlias. These weren't for competition, but were a special gift for a bride to be. Natalie (the daughter of Jennifer and Richard Zuk) wanted as many dahlias as she could muster from gardens of friends and family for a riot of colour for her wedding to Ryan. And the wedding was planned for late September, at the height of dahlia season.

I planted extra dahlias in purple and orange with an eye to blooms that would be sturdy and make good cut flowers. In the orange and gold tones I chose Camano Buz and Blyton Softer Gleam. In the purple tones I picked Mary's Jomanda, Chimacum Troy and Glenplace. In addition I planted an extra Crazy 4 Jessie as it is an eye-catching blend. Although most of the blooms were smaller varieties, I did take a few A's and AA's for the reception area.

We have all gotten a crate or two of dahlias staged for transport to a show or meeting, but I have never tackled cutting that many flowers and transporting them that far. I started by putting down the back seats in my SUV, and setting up the back as a large tarped carrying surface. I then took 9 milk crates, (3x3) and put a large bucket in each and tied them all together with Bungee cords. I prefilled each bucket with water, and had the vehicle ready to go. The dahlias were almost crammed in the buckets to get just as many in as I could, where normally you would never let even one petal brush against another.

I started out in my community garden plot, before sunrise with a headlamp to light my way. It took almost 2 hours to cut and fill the buckets. Everything that was mature or slightly immature was picked, crooked stems and all. I am usually so picky cutting just the "winners", but for this special day I was going for quantity, not necessarily show quality. By the time I was finished, I had over 200 blooms ready to go.

I quickly picked Donna up and we started on our way. Luckily I have heated seats in the front of the car, as I kept the air conditioning on for the flowers and it would have been a pretty chilly ride otherwise.

Each time we stopped for a quick bite to eat or a bathroom break I would open up the back of the SUV to keep the vehicle cool, and people's heads would turn as they walked by. Before long we were in Kelowna, and I was able to add my contribution to those from the Zuk's garden as well as some purchased roses and greenery.

We were able to make 10 table centres, 2 large head table arrangements, 6 bouquets and several boutonnieres and corsages with blooms left over. Jennifer ran the florist show, with several volunteers sorting and arranging the blooms to her exacting standards.

I have never transported so many blooms so far, but it was worth it to see Natalie's face as she carefully chose each bloom for her bouquet. And I was very honoured to see that several of 'my' dahlias made it into her bouquet.

Betty Girard





GARBAGE SMOOTHIES

Donna Quinn found this article from “My Sister’s Pantry” describing how to make liquid compost.

In a blender you pulverize your veggie scraps. When it’s almost full, add some water and blend until the contents are smooth and small—similar to a green smoothie.

The author of My Sister’s Pantry explains what she does with garden rows: “Work between your rows and scrape a top layer of soil or mulch away making a long shallow trench. I usually use 1-2 blenderfuls for an 8 foot length in my raised beds. I do this in 4-5 different places in the same bed. I pour the ‘garbage smoothie’ into the trench. It’s fine to pour close to plants, just don’t slop a bunch on them or dig up their roots. Cover the furrow and let nature take her course.”

My Sister’s Pantry author also suggests being sure to include eggshells in every batch if you tend to get blossom end rot on tomatoes. She also adds coffee grounds to this cold compost.

One of the biggest surprises you’ll have is how quickly the compost disappears. Although you’ll be able to see tiny bits of eggshell for a month or more, the rest of it blends right into the soil in a matter of weeks. Repeating this process every week or so builds rich, dark soil that fosters healthy plants that more easily withstand the onslaught of bugs, diseases, and late summer drought. And don’t you love the idea of how so little in our meal prep goes to waste with this idea?



The 50/50 DRAW

Tickets are still 1 for a Looney - 3 for a Tooney and 10 for \$5.00

REMINDER - Tickets will be on sale at each meeting only until 7:25 PM. Meeting starts at 7:30 PM. Please come early enough to purchase your tickets before the start of the meeting.

Things To Do In February

Now is the time to check on your tubers. If you find any rotten ones throw them out. Any that have a little rot may be saved by cutting off the infected ends and dipping them in some sulphur. If there is a little mould on them I heard spraying them with Lysol can help save them. I have never tried this myself but if they are favourites what heck, give a try. While you're in there digging around why not pick out some to start up for cuttings, especially any that are quite expensive and maybe didn't produce a lot of tubers. You can use any kind of moist potting mix to start them up. Do not over water. When you are starting tubers for cuttings light is not the big factor but bottom heat is. We have heating mats made especially for heating plants, they are available at Lee Valley. If you don't have mats, a good place is on top of your fridge. It may take a while for the shoots to start to show, maybe weeks. Just be patient. There are many ways of to start your cuttings, a good place to start is with our website under Links and check out "Success with Cuttings" borrowed from the ADS website or the Colorado Dahlia Society website has articles with photos.

Tina McNabb



DOOR PRIZES

Everyone looks forward to the door prizes that we award each month at the end of the general meeting. Door prizes do not have to be new, they can be just about anything - cuttings from your garden, extra produce, a "re-gift" or homemade treasures. Names are randomly picked from those who have signed in at the beginning of the meeting and each person chooses their door prize in order of winning. Everyone appreciates contributions to the door prizes. Please bring in anything that you would like to share with the club.

Do you have any gardening tips or tidbits you would like to share? I'm always looking for articles for the bulletin. You can email them to me at themcnabbs@telus.net
Is there anything you would like to see in the bulletin, let me know.

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If there's anything you would like see at a meeting, any ideas or comments you would like to put forth or something you would like to put in the bulletin, please don't hesitate to contact any one of the above listed people here. We are hear to listen.

REFRESHMENT REMINDER

February Meeting

Sandwiches: Evelyn Crawford

Sweets: Carolle Rollie

Fruit/Veggies: Sue Croft

March Meeting

Sandwiches: Mary Anne Hernades

Sweets: Donna Quinn

Fruit/Veggies: Need a Volunteer

Please bring your own mug to cut cost of purchasing foam cups and to be environmentally friendly.