



# *Vancouver Dahlia Society*

*Promoting Dahlia Growing Since 1955*

**March 2016**

**Bulletin No. 2**

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

First of all: a great big thank you to all who participated in our survey. It has been very enlightening. Two themes jumped out at me. One is that members are interested in learning more about basic gardening and the other is that they want to be kept informed with what is happening in the dahlia world. The first we will address by bringing in appropriate speakers. The second we will address by having members who are more in touch with current happenings share more at the general meetings.

To keep up with the latest in the dahlia world, go to [Dahlia.org](http://Dahlia.org), the American Dahlia Society website. If you become a member of the ADS and the Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers, you will be kept in the loop with a newsletter from the Federation and a bulletin from the ADS.

There seems to be little interest in taking cuttings or growing dahlias from seed so we will pull back from those subjects.

Let's talk about soil. There are basically three types of soil: sandy, loam and clay. The best soil is loam. It is usually black in colour and full of organic material. Sandy soil is more on the brown side and needs the addition of organic matter. It is often so porous that nutrients leach out and it needs water more often. Clay soil is more dense and greyish in colour. It could also benefit from the addition of organic material to break it up a little. It can retain too much water and could suffocate the plants. If the tubers are left in the ground for the winter in this type of soil, they could rot. The advantage of clay soil is that it contains a lot of trace minerals that result in more vibrant colours in the blooms.

How can you tell if you have loam soil? Give it the squeeze test. Take a handful of soil, squeeze it and then open your hand. Sandy soil will immediately fall apart. Loam will hold together but will fall apart when lightly prodded. Clay will hold together and will not fall apart when prodded.

Most soil could benefit from the addition of organic matter. The ideal would be to make your own compost but often more is needed than can be quickly produced in the backyard garden. Adding well rotted manure is another option.

Amending the soil is a process. It often takes years to get it where you want it to be. Manure gives you lots of nitrogen so the leaves will grow vigorously. This needs to be balanced with a fertilizer that has a high middle number to bring out the flowers. In the spring, when planting your tubers, add a little 6-8-6 or a few handfuls of sea soil to each hole. Sea soil is a little more expensive but it serves a dual purpose: adding organic matter as well as adding fertilizer.

Hopefully the information I have shared will be useful. Bring your questions to the general meetings and hopefully someone there will have the answers you seek.

Peter Krueger

### **Next Meetings: March 16 and April 20**

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

**Welcome New Member**

Vern Stephens

**UPCOMING TUBER SALE**

The 2016 Tuber Price List will be ready for the March 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.

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 has a couple Dahlias of Today books left for sale. They are \$15.00 this year. There are 2 very interestingg articles on taking seeds along with all the new varieties out for 2016. See her early to get yours. Those of you who requested one in March, yours have been set aside for you.

**2016 SHOW SCHEDULES**

The 2016 Show Schedule with be available at the March Meeting for those of you who are Federation members.

**BUY AND SELL**

Do you have something you would to buy or sell or even give away for free? It doesn't necessarily have to be dahlia oriented. Send me a small ad and I will post it in the bulletin. If you have a photo of the item send that as well.

**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.

## 2016 TUBER SALE WILL BE A ONE DAY SALE! Saturday April 9

### Information for Sellers

The Tuber Price List is now available from Norm Sharp for all sellers. You may pick it up at the March General Meeting or call Norm at 604-589-0463 if you require it sooner. **The pricing stated on this "List" for tubers will be the only acceptable selling prices at our sale.** All sellers must have a seller number (get one from Norm). Your number remains the same from year to year.

Benefits of selling through the club sales:

- Recycle extra tubers you might otherwise throw out
- To earn money to buy new stock
- To help the society earn money (1/2 selling price goes to the club)
- To get your own tubers ready early
- Sellers will be able to purchase tubers at 9:00 am

After our sale, we will need tubers for subsequent sales. All proceeds will go to the VDS. These extra sales will (*we hope!*) pay for some of our rentals plus any other expenses directly pertaining to our tuber sales. After our sale on Sat. there will be boxes under the tables marked "Donation Tubers" for your unsold tubers.

#### For all Dahlia Club Members:

As a member of our club you may purchase tubers earlier than the public:

Saturday morning - 9:00 am to 10:00 am

Members not on the volunteer list may not enter the hall until 9:00 am

7:00 - 9:00 - Put up tables and place tubers

9:00 - 10:00 - MEMBERS ONLY SALE

10:00 - 4:00 - Public Sale

4:00 - 5:00 - Clean up by all members

#### For Details Call:

Carole Rollie 778-571-2370

Tina McNabb 604-572-8981

Norm Sharp 604-589-0463

### **Add these varieties to your 2016 Tuber Sales Shopping List**

VDS Challenge Flower: Lulu Island Art

VDS Jackpot Flowers: Any Collarette (In Memory of Vera Williamson)

Any Pompon (In Memory of Arlene Brodie)

Federation Flower of the Year 2016: AC Abby

Flower of the Year 2017: Chimacum Troy

All member who are selling tubers, would you please give Tina a list of what you might be selling so she can set up the pictures boards ahead of time. Submission of lists can be given to her at the March meeting or you can email them or even phone her up until April 7 or 8th.

We are still in need of photos for the picture boards. If you have any you can email them to Tina McNabb at themcnabbs@telus.net or load them on DVD.

We are also looking for volunteers to work at our sales desks at our tuber sale. If you would like to help out let Tina, Norm or Carole know. We also need plastic bags for buyers to gather their purchases. Please bring these on the day of our sale.

### CORRECT WAY TO LABEL TUBERS



This is an example of a label with a photo and the new barcode. If you are handwriting your labels, the barcode can be printed on avery labels and stuck to either your label or to the bag.

1. The size should be a minimum of 4" x 2"
2. Try and put some kind of identifying colour or symbol (I use the coloured squares at the top) on the label, this makes it easy for pickup at the end of the day. You do not have to use the colour you were assigned in the past if you are using computer generated labels.
3. You no longer need to put your seller number on the label, it is in the bar code. However you still need to put the price on the label for the public to see.
4. The price goes down in the right bottom corner. The prices is determined on the 2015 Price List.
5. On left side can go either a photo and description or just the description. First dahlia name, size, the form, the colour and the height it grows. Again all this information is on the 2015 Price List.
6. In the left hand bottom corner your name and phone number. This is so a buyer can contact you if they have any concerns about the tuber they purchased.
7. Lastly, please attach your label to the **OUTSIDE** of the bag. This makes it easier to view the tuber inside the bag.

If you need a particular photo for your tag, I have a very extensive dahlia photo library and can send you what you need if I have it.

**Important: Please make sure there is an eye on your tuber before you bring it to the sale.**

Tina McNabb

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN BUYING TUBERS

It's important to purchase good quality tubers from a reputable grower or at our Dahlia Society Tuber Sale. Tubers sold in packages from local super stores, hardware stores and general nurseries often are of poor quality and usually produce inferior blooms or sometimes are not even what's pictured on the package.

When choosing a tuber look for one that is firm and hard with no signs of rot. One that's medium size, bigger is not always better. A big tuber tends to depend on the stored food resources in itself and develops a root system a lot slower. Small ones may rot before they have a chance to take hold. If a small one is all you can find you may want to start it up in a small pot and get a root system established.

Next you want to make sure it has a good eye. Tubers with no eyes will not produce a plant. What if the tuber has a long shoot already? You have a couple of options. Plant it up in a pot and get an early start or take the shoot off and more shoots will emerge. You could try and pot up the shoot you removed and see if it will root.

Tubers at our tuber sale will all have price tags on them. On this tag you will see the name of the cultivar, the size of the bloom, the form (ie. formal dec, ball, waterlily, orchid, etc.) and the colour. Most will have a photo. Sometimes this photo is not a good representation of the actual bloom. Some colours like purples, pinks and red do not photograph well. The photos on the picture boards will be closer to the actual colour. Also you will find on the label the height of the plant. This is a generalization. Dahlias grown in the shade will grow much taller than those in full sun. All tuber price tags will have the name of the seller on it. If you want to know more about the variety seek them out and ask.

Tina McNabb



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](mailto:themcnabbs@telus.net) Is there anything you would like to see in the bulletin, let me know.



### 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.



**VANCOUVER DAHLIA SOCIETY CONTACTS**

President	Peter Krueger	604-241-4995	peterkrueger53@hotmail.com
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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**

**March Meeting**

Sandwiches: Mary Ann Hernandez

Sweets: Donna Quinn

Fruit/Veggies: Betty Girard

**April Meeting**

Sandwiches: Need a Volunteer

Sweets: Rada Davy

Fruit/Veggies: Norm Sharp

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