



Vancouver Dahlia Society

Promoting Dahlia Growing Since 1955

May 2014

Bulletin No. 3

President's Message

What time is it? Why, it's planting time! My lilacs are in full bloom and the soil is warm. Actually, I am writing this at the beginning of May so that by the time you receive this newsletter, most of your planting will be done..

Here are a few thoughts on producing seed from your dahlias. Take varieties you want to cross and plant them next to each other in the same row or block. I am tempted to say that bees are lazy but we all know that is not true (Hence the phrase ("busy as a bee"). They will, however, follow the path of least resistance so if there is a flower next to the one they are visiting, they will go to it rather than cross the path to the next row.

Here's is a bit of trivia: have you noticed that dahlias attract primarily bumble bees? This is because they produce mostly pollen (bumble bee food) and very little nectar (honey bee food).

Most dahlias do not self pollinate so they need another variety next to it for the seed to be viable. Some varieties, such as Pam Howden, do not make seed but they do have pollen that can be passed on to other varieties. Giant dahlias make fewer seeds because they have a smaller center while dahlias with larger centers, like open disc varieties, make lots of seed.

The dahlia bloom produces pollen first and only after the pollen has been carried away will the pistil (female parts) begin to open. This keeps them from being self pollinated. If you are hand pollinating, you need to remember to keep revisiting the bloom until all the pistils are open so you can get maximum pollination. This can be done by using a Q tip or picking a flower with pollen and introducing it to the bloom you want to pollinate.

Allow the earliest blooms to go to seed. They may not always produce seed because the bees need to find the plant first. Once the found it, they will keep coming back and subsequent blooms will produce seed.

I will share more about how to collect your seed at a later date.

By all appearances, we have had a very successful tuber sale. A great big thank you to all who helped make it a success. A special thank you to Carole and her team for organizing the event.

Thank you also to those who donated for the auction. Paul Bloomquist donated by far the most tubers from his recent introductions. Be sure to come to the June general meeting where Paul will be speaking about how he creates those magnificent blooms.

This year the American Dahlia Society National Show will close: in Tacoma, just south of Seattle and some of us may be able to participate. To tell us more, and hopefully to get us more excited about the event are Brad and Rosemary Freeman. They will be featured speakers at the general meeting this month. Both Brad and Rosemary hold many offices both with the ADS and the Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers, our local umbrella group. I was first introduced to them when I took the class for accredited judge. They are extremely knowledgeable about dahlias and the workings of both organizations.

Enjoy the sunshine, enjoy the new tubers you may have planted and dream about the lovely flowers that are on their way.

Peter Kreuger

Next Meetings: May 21 & June 18

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

July 19
Federation Summer Workshop
Seattle , WA

July 26
Judges Training
Mt. Vernon Washington

August 23 & 24th
Vancouver Dahlia Society
Annual Dahlia Show

August 30th
ADS National Show
Tacoma, WA

September 20 & 21
Fraser Valley Dahlia Society
Annual Show

MAY MEETING AGENDA

Guest speakers Brad and Rosemary Freeman from the Puget Sound Dahlia Society will speaking to us about the ADS National Show in Tacoma, Washington this year.

JUNE MEETING AGENDA

Paul Bloomquist from the Whatcom Dahlia Society will our guest at the June Meeting. He will talk on hybridizing. This includes cross pollinating and collecting seed. And I'm sure a lot of other interesting tidbits. Paul has more than 25 introductions all with the Bloomquist prefix.

Please come out and support our guest speakers

I have 1 Dahlias of Today Book left. Please let me know if you are interested in purchasing it. The cost is \$10.00.

Tina McNabb

Welcome New Members

Rick and Jane Monchak

Andrea Gin and Dawn Gin

Sandra Taylor

Calida Grymaloski

MORE SAD NEWS

Denna Boyington of the Whatcom Dahlia Society passed away suddenly on March 19, 2014 from a massive heart attach.

Jean Knutson of the Puget Sound Dahlia Society passed away on Tuesday April 29, 2014. Jean had been suffering recently with a breathing disorder. According to her daughter, Jean went out to her back porch to rest, soak up the sun and enjoy her backyard. While there, she peacefully passed away. She was best known for her garden full of Camano Cloud. Nobody could grow it better than her.

APRIL TUBER AUCTION

Thank you Carole Rollie for rounding up the great selection of tubers for our auction last month and to all the hybridizers for donating their new introductions. The auction raised \$298.00.

DOOR PRIZES FOR 2014

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. Each month names are randomly picked from those who have signed in at the beginning of the meeting. Everyone appreciates contributions to the door prizes. Please bring in anything that you would like to share with the club.

RESULTS OF THE ANNUAL TUBER SALE

The Tuber Sale Committee would like to thank all the sellers and volunteers who helped to make this another successful sale again this year! Here is the breakdown on the sale.

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| SATURDAY | |
| Members Sale | \$ 2,920.00 |
| Public Sale | \$ 6,899.00 |
| SUNDAY | |
| | <u>\$ 1,886.00</u> |
| TOTAL | <u>\$11,705.00</u> |
| Sellers Portion | <u>\$5,758</u> |
| Club Portion | <u>\$5,947</u> |

A special thanks goes out to Vera Williamson who donated all her extra tubers to the club.

THE BURNABY RHODODENDRON FESTIVAL

The festival was held on May 4 at the Shadbolt Centre at Deer Lake in Burnaby. We have attended this event every year for over 20 years now. As you may know many of our sellers graciously donate their left over tubers to the club to sell at our booth at the festival. The booth was maned by Carole Rollie, Norm Sharp and Tina McNabb. The Festival itself was a lot smaller this year with less vendors and the weather was less than perfect but we had a lot of dahlia enthusiasts lining up to buy tubers. We had a great afternoon chatting with folks about our favourite flower, helping them to pick out a box full or their first dahlia tuber ever. The result of our day was \$748.00

Again we would like to thank all those individuals who donated their extra tuber for this sale. All the monies made from our tuber sales go to the operation of our club and to put on our Annual Dahlia Show.

Do you have room in your garden for 1 or 2 more dahlias? Be sure to bring your loonies to the next meeting. We will have a good selection of leftover tubers for sale.

BC COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS REPORT

Thank you for allowing me to represent the Vancouver Dahlia Society at the BC Council of Garden Clubs at the recent meeting on March 22nd.

One of the first orders of business was to add the term "floral arts and design" to the description of the council membership. This change to the constitution was overwhelmingly endorsed.

Each executive updated the group on their work over the last year. It was reported that some supporting documents from previous financial statements had been misplaced. The executive is working on a plan to hold all the financial records in an online format that will be secure and accessible to all executive members to prevent such things happening in the future.

The delegates re-elected Richard Zuk as a scholarship trustee. Marilyn Holt was thanked for her years of service at the bulletin editor and a new editor was elected by acclamation. Ruby Miller from the Maple Ridge Garden Club was elected treasurer.

Paul MacDonald, who is a graduate student in pest management presented his thesis on using naturally occurring plant viruses for integrated pest management. His work has been supported by the Mildred Wells Scholarship.

Alice Huang, who is a student at Burnaby South Secondary School updated the delegates on her work with a greening schools initiative.

After a delicious buffet lunch, Thomas Hobbs presented an engaging talk entitled "Hollywood North to Green Acres", the trials and tribulations of moving his home and garden from West Point Grey to South Langley.

Betty Girard

Scholarship Fund - Growing the Future

The BC Council of Garden Clubs sponsors a scholarship fund that is administered by the Vancity Community Foundation. Each year the fund distributes scholarships to worthy horticultural students throughout the province. Their goal is to distribute \$8000 in scholarships in 2014.

Perhaps you would like to honour the life of a gardener? Or just support the important role that professional horticulturalists play in our food security, environmental stewardship and our enjoyment of gardens and gardening.

Consider making a tax deductible donation this year. You can send a cheque to:
BC Council of Garden Clubs Scholarship Fund
c/o Vancity Community Foundation
PO Box 2120 STN Terminal
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 5R8

If you have any questions about this fund please contact Richard Zuk

THINGS TO DO IN IN MAY AND JUNE

Dahlias need a sunny location with about 8 hours of sunlight. Drive a stake into the ground where you want to plant your tuber. Stakes can be made from many types of material. 1"x 2" wooden stakes are good but will not last forever. A lot of growers are using iron re-bar, painted to stop rusting. The stakes should be between 24" and 30" apart. Dig a hole about 6 in. deep next to the stake. Lay the tuber horizontally in hole with the eye facing up about 2 in. from stake. Cover lightly with soil, as the plant begins to grow gradually fill in the hole. Make sure you label the stake with the correct name of the variety you are planting. It's a good idea to keep a map of your garden and what is planted where just in case your labels should go missing. Crows are notorious for stealing tags and tubers as well.

The dahlias biggest enemy is the slug. They just love to chew on those tender new shoots. If this happens don't despair another shoot will soon appear. In the meantime there are lots of slug remedies on the nursery shelf. If you have no children or pets, try putting a ring of slug bait all the way around each plant. You can also try slug traps with bait or even your favorite beer. There are also many other remedies for slugs on the internet. Once the plant is big enough the slugs tend to stay away.



TOPPING OR PINCHING

To promote sturdier, bushier plants with better blooms, it is recommended to pinch out the center growth of the plant. This topping will force the plant to send out branches from the axil of the first sets of leaves. If you do not top your plant, you could end up with only one bloom and a long wait for a second flush of flowers. Dwarf dahlias do not require topping.

WHEN TO TOP?

For giant and large varieties, pinch out at 2 or 3 sets of leaves.
 For medium size blooms, pinch out at 3 to 4 sets of leaves.
 Small size blooms and most other types, at 5 or 6 sets of leaves.
 If, by the time 5 or 6 sets of leaves occur and you find a flower bud there, pinch it out, this bloom will be very inferior.



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 |
| Past President | Norm Sharp | 604-589-0463 | sharpz@shaw.ca |
| Secretary | Jack Duncan | 604-420-9301 | jack.duncan@shaw.ca |
| Treasurer | Donna Quinn | | |
| Directors | Robin Blackmore | 604-435-2530 | katkids4@shaw.ca |
| | Evelyn Crawford | 604-437-8395 | evelyn.crawford@shaw.ca |
| | Sue Croft | 604-879-0135 | suecroft@telus.net |
| | Vittorio Fontana | 604-524-4746 | viandahlias@shaw.ca |
| | Betty Girard | 604-431-8611 | vdsmembership@telus.net |
| | Wally Kurth | 604-536-6878 | wally_kurth@telus.net |
| | Tina McNabb | 604-572-8981 | themcnabbs@telus.net |
| | Dorothy Pitre | | |
| | Carole Rollie | 778--571-2370 | carollie@shaw.ca |
| Gary Rollie | | | |
| | Richard Zuk | 604-294-0237 | rtzjg@telus.net |
| Bulletin Editor | Tina McNabb | 604-572-8981 | themcnabbs@telus.net |
| Membership | Betty Girard | 604-431-8611 | vdsmembership@telus.net |
| Publicity | Evelyn Crawford | 604-437-8395 | evelyn.crawford@shaw.ca |
| Food Services | Sue Croft | 604-879-0135 | suecroft@telus.net |
| Webmaster | Jack Duncan | 604-420-9301 | jack.duncan@shaw.ca |
| Show Awards | Robin Blackmore | 604-435-2530 | katkids4@shaw.ca |

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

May Meeting

Sandwiches: Carole Rollie

Sweets: Dorothy Mallan

Fruit/Veggies: Tina McNabb

June Meeting

Sandwiches:

Sweets: Avrum Sudack

Fruit/Veggies: Dave MacIntosh

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