

KITSAP COUNTY DAHLIA SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>From Your Newsletter Ed</i>	1
<i>September Meeting</i>	1
<i>October Meeting</i>	2
<i>2006-2007 Officers</i>	2
<i>KCDS Dahlia Gardens</i>	2
<i>It Must Be Time To...</i>	3
<i>Federation & ADS</i>	3

Special points of interest:

- Cut down dahlias - 10/13
- October Meeting - 10/18
- Dig - 10/27
- Divide - 11/3

Upcoming Events

October

- 13 **Cutting down Blooms at KCDS Gardens, 9 am**
- 18 KCDS General Meeting - Crystal Grange
- 27 **Digging Tubers, 9 am at Post Office and Roadhouse Nursery**

November

- 3 **Divide Tubers - Crystal Grange, 9 am**

August

- 2-3 KCDS Dahlia Show - President's Hall

FROM YOUR NEWSLETTER EDITOR

I always feel so sad at this time of year. Even though the dahlias are beginning to look a little down trodden, especially up close, there is still a lot of color and from a distance they still look gorgeous! But, as it gets toward the end of October, it is time to cut the blooms down in order to begin the process of digging and dividing the tubers.

Once they are all cut down, I just start hoping for no rain while we dig the dahlias. Bob and I dig only what we can divide that day or in the next several evenings after work, so I hope for little rain in early November (my wish does NOT

always come true).

We are typically able to get all of our divided by Thanksgiving (gives us just one more thing to be thankful for!). Once the tubers are put away for the winter, we can start looking at what new varieties we want to purchase for the upcoming year. Of course, any new varieties we purchase have to have cuttings taken so that we have several of each of those varieties. We've started trying to grow some seedlings again so the winter is also time to gather the seeds. There just never seems to be a dull moment in the dahlia growing year.

Terry Schroeder

SEPTEMBER'S MEETING

In September, Dick Porter, Whatcom County Dahlia Society member provided the program. Dick gave a presentation showing where he grows his flowers (both in his yard in Bellingham and in a garden for the Master Gardeners). Dick is a Master Gardener and grows a few hundred plants. He has been known for his expertise in growing pompon dahlias, but he also grows many other types of dahlias. Dick brought a dahlia of each new variety that he

had purchased in 2006 - over 50 varieties!! He had something of just about everything, ranging from AA to mignon singles and formal decorative to lacinated. It was quite a colorful display. Dick shared why he chose certain types and whether he grew them specifically for showing, because they were nice blooms that added color and variety to his garden or because they were an especially nice cut flower.

Mike and Sally Paulus

won the Mini Dahlia Show with his bloom of Hamari Accord. Mike and Sally had not been able to enter any dahlias in a show this year, so this was a special win for them.



Hamari Accord

Digging & Dividing Tubers

Thursday
October
18th

OCTOBER MEETING

The October meeting will be information about digging and dividing dahlia tubers.

As well as having information at our regular meeting, we encourage members to come to both the digging and dividing work parties to learn how to perform those tasks properly.

It is also time to renew

membership in KCDS, Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers and American Dahlia Society. A membership renewal is enclosed with this newsletter and will be available at the meeting.

Election of Officers for 2007-2008 will also be done at the October meeting.



Labeling a Tuber



Eyes on a Tuber

2006-2007 OFFICERS

President: **Eric Anderson, 360-698-1330**

Vice President: **Beth Taylor, 360-620-3808**

Corresponding Secretary: **Terry Schroeder, 360-479-6362**
(newsletter)

Recording Secretary: **Zorina Bleau, 360-871-4135**
(meeting minutes)

Treasurer: **Bob Schroeder, 360-479-6362**
(membership, financial, publications)

Trustees: **Tom Kramer, 360-621-9480**

Joan Hagerman, 360-876-0518

Pat Paulsen, 360-698-0123

Federation Representative: **Howard (Dutch) Boerger,**
253-857-8222

ADS Representative: **Chet Haus, 360-698-4874**

Contact any of these people regarding club events or for answers to dahlia gardening questions. The Board Meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at 6 PM, at varying locations; check with any officer for the current location of the meeting.

The General KCDS Meetings are at 7PM on the third Thursday of the month at the Crystal Grange, 2160 NE Paulson Road, Poulsbo, WA 98370. **(with the exception of July, August and January)**. The Board and General meetings are open to all.



KCDS DAHLIA GARDENS

I can't believe that it is already time to start thinking about digging and dividing, but it is!

On October 13, we will be cutting down the dahlias at the post office and the Road House Nursery. We will leave them for two weeks and then dig them on **October 27th**. We also will need to dig about 100 tubers that were planted at Ebeth's house. Both the cutting down and digging will begin at 9 am and continue until we are finished. We will divide the tubers on **November 3rd** at our new location, The Crystal Grange. We hope to divide in the basement, which will allow us to leave them

to dry, as long as needed. It will also be very easy to put them away in the storage boxes that we have down there. Thanks to Beth and Jim and Richard and Monica, and Bob we have plenty of boxes for storage. Bob and Beth made sure that all the Styrofoam boxes were washed and cleaned thoroughly in a bleach solution.



Storage Area for KCDS Tubers

IT'S OCTOBER; IT MUST BE TIME FOR...

Taken from Dahlias: A Monthly Guide

Digging and Preparing Tubers for Winter Storage

The most-often asked question by novice dahlia growers is, "Do I need to dig my dahlia tubers every year?" There are two possible answers to this question. If it's likely the ground will freeze to the depth of the tubers, then by all means, dig and store them. If you have more moderate winters, you can protect the tubers by placing six inches of leaves, grass or compost over them after you have got the stalks close to the ground. However, be sure that you have good drainage, as dahlia tubers don't tolerate being in soggy soil for very long. You will also need to dig and divide the tuber clumps about every three years to maintain the bloom quality.

Early October is the time to

prepare for digging, dividing and storage. Mark the plants you intend to keep, making sure that you know the variety name for each plant. Gather all of your supplies including storage medium (KCDS uses cedar shavings), buckets, bleach, plastic bags, cutting tools and tuber marking instruments (KCDS uses indelible, "ink in a pencil" pencils). After the first frost (or before the fall rains begin to saturate the soil), cut down the plants to about six inches above the ground. Then wait a week or so before doffing the clumps to give the growth eyes a chance to become more visible as the tubers start to send up new shoots. This makes the clumps easier to divide.

Before digging remove the support stakes and transfer the

plant labels to the cut dahlia stalks. To dig, insert a sharp shovel into the ground about a foot from the stalk, working your way completely around the clump. This severs the long roots and gently loosens the soil around the clump. This helps prevent the breaking of necks on the tubers as you lift the clumps. Lift the clump gently from the ground with the shovel under the clump while brushing away any mulch or excess soil. If you have



A Dahlia Plant Cut Down

(Continued on page 4)

WHAT IS THE FEDERATION AND THE ADS?

The Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers is the regional organization that KCDS is a member of. Individual members are encouraged to belong to the Federation. The Federation offers two workshops, one in the spring and one in the summer. The spring workshop typically focuses on issues around the growing of dahlias. In the summer, the focus is typically on the showing and judging of dahlias. Even for those who are not interested in doing a lot of showing or in judging, good information about dahlias is provided. Even if you aren't showing, a lot of the information about what makes a good show flower also applies to a good cut flower. When you join the Federation, you receive three or four newsletters each year, a free show book and

information about their workshops. The Federation also provides member societies with show tags and hog rings. These are then provided to the individual members at no cost.

The American Dahlia Society is our national organization. Members of the ADS receive the annual Classification Guide and the quarterly Bulletin. The Bulletin is filled with information about dahlias and about what is going on in other areas of the nation. The ADS also sponsors an annual photography contest and publishes some of the winning photos in their September Bulletin. Each member society is able to send information about their club's activities to be printed in the Quarterly Bulletin. The ADS is also instrumental in supporting the research that is being done at WSU

(Continued on page 4)

**Kitsap County
Dahlia Society**

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IT'S OCTOBER

(Continued from page 3)

a digging partner, inserting shovels on opposite sides of the clump and lifting together is an effective method.

It is best to wash the clumps with a garden hose soon after digging. A spray attachment helps concentrate a stream of water into the crevices to remove rocks and dirt and make the growth eyes visible. Do not use too much water pressure so that you damage the tubers, however. A screen is a convenient place to wash clumps. After washing, trim off the hair roots and damaged tubers. Place the washed clumps in a well-ventilated, frost-free area until they are surface dry, which should occur in a few hours. The clumps are now ready to be divided and stored for the winter. Washed clumps should be divided within a few days of digging or the tubers will start to shrivel. Placing newspaper over the clumps will diminish the chance of shriveling.

FEDERATION AND THE ADS?

on the dahlia virus.

Both of these organizations are very important to our local society. I encourage everyone to consider joining and supporting these organizations as well as KCDS.



**KITSAP COUNTY DAHLIA SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 502
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Place
Stamp
Here