

Fraser Valley Dahlia Society

Newsletter

46172 Clare Ave., Chilliwack, BC, V2P6N1

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Since 1997 Vol.1. February. - March, 2010

Meetings: Held on the 4th Tuesday of the month February through October,

At 8 PM, Central Heights Church,

1661, McCallum Road. Abbotsford

Enter at rear of church at Gym entrance.

ATTENTION

Meeting: 8 PM, February 23, 2010 Cancelled to let you enjoy the Olympics

Meeting 8 PM, March, 23, 2010

Refreshments: Peggy Byland, Arlyne Kuiper and Rene Vandeburgt.

Program: Getting ready for our tuber sale, and getting the garden ready.

Question and answer period.

President's report

Well here we are again, ready, willing, and able, to grow and show the best blooms the Pacific Northwest has ever seen. That's the little pep talk I give myself each year at this time. Diana smiles at me and agrees with all my dreams. I guess she knows how to keep a dahlia nut happy.

I have checked my tubers in storage and all seems well, other than a little drying out, but no rot as of yet. I went back to my original method of storing tubers in coarse vermiculite and newspaper and I'm happy I did so.

The weather this winter has been more acceptable than that of last year, except the warmer temperature seemed to make it difficult to get the low storing temperature I would like, thus causing the drying out situation. The layers upon layers of newspaper seem to at least keep the tubers at a constant temperature – even though I would like it a little lower.

I hope everyone's tubers are storing well. We still have 2 – 3 months left before planting, so be sure to check your tubers for problems that you can deal with now.

Our first meeting this year is February 23rd, same place and time – and will surely get us gardeners motivated. Our program for the evening will be taking cuttings. I will be listening and watching carefully as I have only done this a few times, with limited success.

I am looking forward to seeing and talking with all our members. Let's make this year the Fraser Valley Dahlia Society's best and most fun year yet.

Doug Youngson, President

Since we have cancelled our Feb. meeting, it doesn't mean spring is not just around the corner. It is time to check out our tubers. Make sure any tuber not in good health is tended to, or removed. At this time it is also a good time to select tubers you would like to take cuttings from. Place these tubers in a container in some flats or milk cartons with some good potting soil or soilfree mix. Cover to the neck of the tubers but leave the part with the eyes exposed so you can take the cutting. When the young foliage has 3 sets of leaves, it is time to take your first cutting's. If you can provide a bit of bottom heat, the tubers will start to grow quickly. Careful with the water, just moist is good. Do not drown the tubers. Another way to speed up the process is to take the potted tuber and put in a plastic bag to create a mini greenhouse. Depending on the number of cuttings you are planning to make, place the cuttings in a pot or flat. Soil must be damp and do not let it dry out. Provide a cover or dome over the cuttings until rooting starts. Plastic glass makes a nice dome over a small pot. Do not let the condensation build up on the inside of the domes as it will start problems, better to dry it once a day and provide some air circulation. Please get them started around Feb 8 to 10. Provide lots of light.

At our March meeting Roy Campbell will show you in detail his, power point demonstration on how it is done correctly, just incase I am not clear enough for you. Good luck.

Ralph

I have completed our tuber sale price list. All sellers make sure you get one. Thank you to the members, who got their varieties list early to me. It made my life a lot easier. It takes many hours to get this list up to date and formatted for printing and have it available on time for the selling members. So there is time to make all the labels. This year all sellers must sell the tubers at posted prices no exceptions please.

Any member who have not sold tubers at our sale before make sure you get a sellers number from me.

The Annual Tuber sale will be held April 17, 2010. In the George Preston recreation Centre, 20699 42 Ave. Sale for public 9 AM till 5 PM. Please keep this date open. The club needs your help even if you are not selling tubers.

Growing Dahlias in pots.

We are moving into smaller housing with less garden space. The time of large gardens is nearly over. A lot of folks living in apartments or town houses do not have much space to play with. An option can be growing in pots. Growing in pots can be quite rewarding. Some of you may remember the National show in 1996 held in Richmond. We were greeted by two rows of blooming Dahlias in large pots. I have never before or after, seen a nice display of pot grown Dahlias like it. Most of us have seen in the Stach's yard, many plants growing in pots. So here are some ideas on how to grow dahlias in pots. First of all, find containers, with good depth, and large enough to give the plant ample space to grow. We know when dahlias are growing the plants will be top heavy, so we must have some solid weight in the bottom of the pots.

2 or 3" off gravel will help. Put your stake in right to the bottom. After this a layer of good potting soil or soilless mix 3 or 4" will do. Plant the tuber in the container - with the neck of the tuber at least 4" from the side of the pot. This way the plant will be better centered when it starts to grow. Cover tuber with some more soil. Water sparingly until it gets roots, and wait for the plant to grow. As the plant grows fill the pot up to the last 2" from the rim with more soil. On the top, sprinkle slow release fertilizer, something like Osmacote 14-14-14. Remember it reacts to water temperature. Use tipped water and the plants will get nourishment steadily and grow healthy. If you place the container on a hard surface the roots will stay in the pot. When set on soil, roots will get out and go down in the soil. Good luck.

Ralph

Federation Spring Workshop - Mt. Vernon Senior Center, 1401 Cleveland Avenue Mt. Vernon March 20, 2010 -