



CREEKSIDE GENEVEVE, B, FD,
BI, FLOWER OF THE YEAR

DAHLIA SOCIETY OF GEORGIA NEWSLETTER

NOV/DEC 2006

WWW.DAHLIASOCIETYOFGEORGIA.ORG

MINI SHOW WITH MANY TALENTS

The 2006 Mini Show showed off the dahlia growing talents of some of our members and one non-member that didn't show in the annual show. Gerald Johnson, Henry Everett, and Gene Hutchinson were the big winners showing multiple blooms of different dahlias. One bloom that caught the eye of everyone that we haven't seen before in competition was called Bumble Rumble, CO, DB

PR/W/w/pr, showed by Gerald Johnson. It was a lovely bloom with great color and excellent show characteristics.

We would like to thank everyone that entered blooms in the show and those that came to see the blooms. Below is a shot of the show table & Brian Killingsworth.



NOVEMBER MEETING

NOVEMBER 20

7:30 PM

GARDEN CLASSROOM

BASEMENT

ATLANTA BOTANICAL GARDEN

The November program will focus

on putting your dahlia garden to bed for the winter. Demonstrations of dividing tubers will be given and various methods used by members for over wintering the resulting tubers will be discussed at the meeting. Come and learn how to divide your tubers and how to winterize your plants.

2006

ANNUAL CALENDAR

- NOVEMBER MEETING, NOV 20, ABG
- CHRISTMAS PARTY— DECEMBER 10TH, 2 PM, ASHWOOD CONDOS CLUB HOUSE, 3227 HENDERSON MILL ROAD, ATLANTA

2007

ANNUAL CALENDAR

- JANUARY MEETING, JAN 15, ABG
- FEBRUARY MEETING, FEB 19 ABG
- MARCH MEETING, MARCH 19 ABG
- APRIL TUBER SALE, APRIL 16 ABG EXHIBIT HALL
- MAY TUBER SALE, MAY 21 ABG EXHIBIT HALL
- JUNE MEETING, JUNE 18 ABG
- JULY MEETING/PICNIC, TBA
- AUGUST MEETING, AUG 20 ABG
- NATIONAL DAHLIA SHOW CHICAGO, IL
- SEPTEMBER, ANNUAL SHOW SEPT 29/30 ABG

DIGGING & STORING OF DAHLIA TUBERS- A Good project for Nov./Dec.



TUBERS READY FOR DIVIDING AND STORING FOR THE WINTER AT THE HOME OF ED BONCI AND PAM JENSEN OUR AFFILIATE MEMBERS IN NEW YORK STATE.

There are two schools of thought about digging and storing dahlias.

- 1) In our climate we can take the easier approach and simply mulch the still buried roots with about 6" of pine straw or leaves or any other lofty mulch that should ward off any deep freezing of the ground. After several years you will have to dig them in order to split the large mass that has developed-just like you do with daylilies and Shasta daisies.
- 2) Those who dig and store every year do not want to take the risk of losing their tubers and more so, want to separate the clumps of highly desirable tuber to insure having more plants of their favor varieties in the future and to share at our tuber sales.

The following article details one approach for those in 2) above. (Photos are from the Colorado Dahlia Society.)



Although your dahlia plants are still alive, surly by this time next month a frost will have ended their 2006 growth. With the holidays just around the corner now is a good time for us to plan to dig and store our crop of tubers. Once frost does kill the tops of your plants I recommend that you cut off and remove all plant

SOCIETY CHRISTMAS PARTY



LEO G, BALL, RED

The 2006 Christmas party will be held on Sunday afternoon DECEMBER 10TH, AT 2 PM. The location is the club house of Ashwood Condominiums at 3227 Henderson Mill Road, Atlanta, GA 30341 which is located right next to I-285 on the east side. A MAP IS LOCATED ON PAGE 6 OF THIS NEWSLETTER.

We ask that all attendees bring a covered dish of a favorite Christmas time vegetable, salad or dessert that everyone can enjoy. The Society will provide the meat and drinks.

We also have a gift exchange during the party so please bring a gift of \$10 and under in value. Men bring a gift for a man and women bring a gift for a women. While dahlia gardening is our hobby gifts are not limited to that pastime only.

Please mark the date on your calendar and plan to attend and share a bit of the Christmas season with your dahlia friends.

Leo G above is a lovely red ball that starts out as a pinkish red and progresses to a bright Christmas red towards the end of the season. It grows well here in the Atlanta area but suffers from a lack of popularity and availability. Only one member grows it but look for it at our tuber sales in the Spring..

material to within about 8" to 12" of the ground. (You do not have to wait. The plants have been in the ground long enough and your tubers should be mature enough to dig and store.) This remaining stalk will act as a handle. If you've not had a rain within the last 7 to 10 days it is a good idea to water the dahlias (try not to let water get into the open top of the stalks). Once watered, wait about a week to generate eye growth on the tubers and then dig.

Place the shovel blade or garden fork prongs about a foot from the center of the stalk and gently pry up the mass from all 4 sides. GENTLY!! Dahlias are most tender now and the slender necks of the tubers can and will easily break. Do not be in a hurry and try to lift from just one side. You will lose the best tubers with the most roots because they have successfully grown far out into the surrounding soil. Look at this operation as gathering a root crop and you're trying to maximize the number of tubers collected.

At this time you can wash off the soil and mark the name of the variety on the clump of tubers by using an indelible pencil or by securing a tag to the old central stalk. Leave the washed clumps out to air dry for several hours



but not in direct sun. Invert the clump during this time so any water trapped in the old stalk will drain. Be careful when handling the tubers, not only because of the tender necks but also because the skin of these newly dug tubers is especially tender at this time and the tubers need to be cured before storing. Also, concentrate on keeping the right name with the right clump. Murphy's Law rules often apply during this operation.



What is curing? I understand it to be a slow drying process of the tubers so that the skin will thicken and toughen. By accomplishing this curing the tubers should store well during the winter because the thick and tough skin will prevent any moisture

from escaping from the tubers. When tubers lose moisture they shrivel and will not be viable at spring planting time. Now is when you must decide if you will only cut the clump into halves or quarters or whether you will try to claim as many tubers as possible. This decision is usually tied to how many plants you want to grow next year and whether or not this particular variety is a favorite of yours. Having dug, washed, dried and decided the number to store, study the clump closely. The old stalk "flows" into the new tubers over a slender neck. The eyes for next year's growth form where the old stalk (mother plant) connects to the often time slender necks. In this photo the eyes are the white, circular objects. One eye is protruding in the upper right corner of the photo.

Warning- A word about spreading diseases when dividing tubers. It is believed that a multitude of virus that can infect dahlias can be passed on by contaminated blades. I've used a flame or bleach dip to clean blades between clumps.

Rule of thumb - Every tuber or partial clump must have an eye in order to grow next season. Eyes are most visible in the fall and right after digging and washing. If dug but not cut up at that time, the eyes will sink back into the necks and often become invisible until the clumps awaken in spring.

NOVEMBER ROSE SOCIETY MEETING

The Atlanta Rose Society November meeting will be held on Tuesday evening, the 21st at 7:30 PM at the Atlanta Botanical Garden and their speaker will be T. J. David, the co-founder of the International World Peace Rose Gardens. One of these gardens is located at the MLK Historic Site in Atlanta. The program will include a lecture and slides of the gardens.

If you would like to attend please notify Stan Leacock at 770-908-7526.

HOW IS THE SOIL IN YOUR DAHLIA BED?

Do you have a lot of earthworms in your soil? Why do you want a lot of earthworms in your soil? I think the answer to that question is obvious as they improve the tilth of our soil adding their casting which enriches the soil. The secret to having a lot of worms in your garden is making sure they have plenty to eat so you need to add humus to the soil each year in order to give them plenty to eat and for the overall health of your garden soil. The nutrients in compost, manure, leaves or any other natural material that you add will only last for about one year so you need to introduce a new batch each year. The fall is an excellent time to get your soil ready for next year as ground up leaves will decompose by spring.

You may or may not know that used coffee grounds may be added to your garden soil to enrich it. They have about 2% nitrogen and other nutrients in them. They are also acidic so that needs to be taken into account in the pH of your soil if you use a lot of them. Google coffee grounds in the garden for additional information.

Using a sterilized and sharp blade, locate tubers with solid necks that connect to the older stalk material (“mother plant”). Carefully cut these away from the clump and trim off any rotted area and stringy roots.



Bumble Rumble 673 CO-DB PR/W/w/pr



WESTON SPANISH DANCER M, C, FL



PENNSGIFT AA, ID, LAV



CREEKSID MARGE WL, ORG



Marking tubers correctly is very important. If the tuber is dry, use a permanent ink Sharpie. If the tubers are still damp, use an indelible Noblot Ink Pencil. These special pencils are available from commercial dahlia dealers or perhaps the society.

A word about tuber rot while in storage is needed. Try to cut off all of the old stalk before storing. It is often the source from which rot will spread. Another location for rot is in the very center of the tuber. The latter is hard to find and often goes undetected until spring when you find that the rot has advanced throughout the tuber and turn this one time promise into useless mush.

A step I've used to guard about this internal rot is to soak cut tubers in a solution of fungicide before allowing for an over night drying. In particular I use Banrot, a product from Scott at a mixture of 1TBS per gallon of water. The tubers are submerged for about 10 minutes then laid out to re-dry. Other products to use are Consan or Cleery 3336. The society might obtain one or more of these products and make available to members at cost.



The final step is to put the tubers in a storage medium for their winter hibernation. I have used perlite, vermiculite and wood shaving.

(Sprinkle a little bit of sulfur in the bag, too.) All have good and bad points so it is up to you. Perlite and wood shavings make for “pretty” tubers that stay plump. But they also seem to pass rot from one tuber to the next even if they don't touch. Vermiculite, the courser the better, do not pass on rot but seem to allow some shriveling and can be dangerous to work with in enclosed areas. The same inhalation danger applies to perlite. As I said, it's up to you.

Finally I place the tuber and storing medium in a ziplock bag that I leave open during storage to allow the ebb and flow of moisture. Also write the name of the variety on the outside of the bag. There are bags on the market that have holes in them, allowing the tubers to breath. The filled bags are stored in the dark and cool as possible but not freezing. I check several bags during the winter to see if all is well. Then it's time to rest ——us and the tubers. BK





BRIAN KILLINGSWORTH GIVING GERALD JOHNSON A STATE DAHLIA SOCIETY MEDAL FOR HIS WINNING ENTRIES IN THE 2006 MINI SHOW. THEY INCLUDED BUMBLE RUMBLE, JESSEE G AND OTHERS.

HENRY EVERETT (SITTING) AND GENE HUTCHISON ADMIRING THEIR STATE DAHLIA SOCIETY MEDALS THEY RECEIVED FOR THEIR WINNING ENTRIES IN THE MINI SHOW.



KENORA SUNSET
B, SC, FL



NEPOS, WL,
LB W/L

CHRISTMAS PARTY MAP

ASHWOOD CONDOS

3227 Henderson Mill Rd

Atlanta GA

30341-4515 US

TAKE I-285 TO THE CHAMBLEE TUCKER RD EXIT & GO EAST. TURN RIGHT ON TO HENDERSON MILL ROAD AND CONTINUE TO THE ASHWOOD CONDOS. YOU CAN ALSO ACCESS HENDERSON MILL ROAD BEHIND NORTHLAKE MALL AND TAKE IT TO THE CONDOS. CHAMBLEE TUCKER RD CROSSES I-85 IF YOU ARE COMING FROM THE SOUTH.

