



DAHLIA SOCIETY OF GEORGIA NEWSLETTER

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FLOWER OF THE YR

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600 BLOOMS IN THE ATLANTA SHOW

After a year's absence from the show table at all Southern States shows Dahlias in the South made a rousing comeback. Growers from Alabama, North Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia converged at the Atlanta Botanical Garden to have a wonderful show with many high quality blooms after another year of drought. All types of blooms were represented from 12" AA to the smallest Mignon Single. The big winners included Paula & Dan Pinholster, Georgia, Ray Phillips, Tennessee, Buddy

Dean and Allen Haas, North Carolina and

Ed & Cathy Whitfield, Alabama. Lori Goehring took the honors as the best Novice bloom. A special award was given to Maddy Varsalona in the Junior Division. Congratulations to all the winners and to all that participated in the show. It was a great time together and it was good to be on the dahlia show circuit again.



MINI DAHLIA SHOW

OCTOBER 20

BASEMENT CLASSROOM

ATLANTA BOTANICAL GARDEN

7:30 PM

STAGING BEGINS AT 7 PM

The purpose of the mini show is to let new growers and growers that have not had extensive experience in showing in the annual show the opportunity to show their dahlia blooms in an environment that is not pressure packed as the annual show. Bring whatever blooms are left in your garden. Cont P 2

2008 CALENDAR

OCT-DEC

OCTOBER MEETING

MINI-SHOW

OCT 20, 7:30 PM

ABG

NOVEMBER MEETING

DIGGING & DIVIDING/WINTERING

OVER IN THE GROUND

NOV 17, 7:30 PM

ABG

CHRISTMAS PARTY

HOME OF PAUL

&

ALYCE DOLAN

SYMRNA, GA

DECEMBER 7

2-5 PM



(Cont from Page 1) Ribbons and monetary awards will be given. More experienced growers will have staging material available for you and will provide assistance in helping you stage your blooms. It will be a lot of fun and the best part.....no pressure so everyone bring some blooms to enter. More blooms the better the show.

THANKS FOR A GREAT 2008 SHOW

My dear friends of the dahlia,

Dan and I want to use the monthly newsletter as the medium to thank all of you who contributed your time and energy to the Georgia Dahlia Show.

What a beautiful and successful dahlia show we put on this past weekend. The beauty came from the multitude of colorful blooms that awed everyone who walked through the door and from the blue skies and crisp air that we all enjoyed. The success came from the volunteers. You all came on time, ready and willing to go to work. Thank you to the people who helped Dan set up the tables. Thank you for all the good snacks that you provided. The exhibitors need an hourly shot of energy, and a sandwich, cookie, or handful of grapes is all it takes. Having bottles filled with water, wet oasis, and other supplies brought to the exhibitor is a big help and much appreciated.

Frank McComb, thank you for getting all the carafes and vases transported to the exhibition hall. Your willingness to help all weekend was vital to the success of our show.

Thank you, Ed Mercer, for organizing the judges and the clerks. Now, once you were organized, thank you judges and clerks. Especially you first time clerks, wasn't that an eye-opening experience?

Thank you Gale Geurin and lunch volunteers for getting our delicious lunch delivered and set up. We all enjoyed the picnic atmosphere.

Thanks to the receptionists who greeted the visitors. Just think, you might have influenced someone to become an active member of the dahlia society.

Thank you "CLEAN-UP CREW". From the time we started removing ribbons until the exhibition hall and kitchen (thank you, Regina Kreiner) was totally empty and clean was about two hours. That has got to be a record clean-up time. And that's all because there were a lot of able-bodied, energetic volunteers to do the work.

We look forward to seeing you at the next meeting when we can brag about the beautiful show.

Yours truly,

Dan and Paula Pinholster

CHORES IN THE DAHLIA GARDEN- OCTOBER

After all of the dreaming, planning and hard work we now have the last of the blooms. Isn't it amazing how rapidly they grow, from day to day you can almost see the changes. The shortening of the days, the lessening of light, all go into urging the dahlias to make seed. These dahlia blooms of October are determined to produce attractive flowers to entice the various pollinators to do their job, and be quick about it. The blooms seem to blow their centers more quickly now in order to make it easier for the bees and butterflies to get to the pollen.

Tagging the "Keepers"

By now you probably have a good idea which of the varieties you will want to grow next year. There are still probably several weeks before the first killing frost. My advice is - don't waste it. Go through your garden now and cull the disappointing plants so you can use that space next year. Most people have a limited area in which to grow and you don't need to take up space with those varieties that did not meet your expectations. There is no sense in digging and storing dahlias that didn't perform as you expected. Trash them now. Literally pull them out of the ground, bag them and get any debris from those plants in case they might be infected with some virus or other disease. This winter when you get the new catalogs you will find plenty of new, appealing dahlias that you will want to grow in 2009. You will be glad that you didn't keep disappointments. While conducting this purge, be sure to place a sturdy tag on the "keepers" (attaching it to the main stalk of the plant) because when the frost kills the top of your plants, they will all look alike. This is from one who knows from past "surprises". I'm tagging my plants now while they have verifying blooms.

If you have a digital camera use it to record blooms of those you plan to keep. In the middle of winter it is always a joy to pull up a dahlia photo file and go through it, remembering the beauty of the blooms and the thrill you felt when seeing the first good bloom of a particular variety.

Study Your Garden

Now is the time to study the layout of your garden regarding sunlight and drainage. If all of your dahlia plants are skinny and tall, with weak stems, then you probably need to provide more sun next year. There are a few dahlias that naturally grow 7' - 9', but most are in the 3' to 6' range with the average being about 4 1/2' tall. The garden in this photo would gain from the removal of some neighboring trees.

If you suspect a drainage problem then dig your tubers. You might find some indication of poor drainage previously undetected i.e. mud, even though it has not rained



lately. I can not over emphasize the need for good drainage. Remember a rule of thumb from the Spring - "dahlias don't like wet feet". Record any changes that need to be done before next year's planting and keep track of that record. Plan now to improve your garden before you plant next year!

For those who do not want to dig up the tubers, be sure to cover the beds with about 6" of mulch. Wheat straw, pine straw, or leaves make for a good, protective covering that should carry your dahlias through the winter.

Keep Deadheading

With the dahlias producing so many blooms now, we are kept very busy trying to remove the dead blooms. Dahlias lose the back petals first and this creates almost a steady rain of spent petals. They quickly start to decay wherever they come to rest. If left on the ground they can quickly become a breeding ground for various harmful fungi such as Botrytis. By deadheading, you remove a lot of decay before it can cause fungal problems. You also make the plant rush to make a replacement bloom thereby providing you with a constant source of blooms. There is a right way to deadhead and a wrong way. It is tempting to just grab the faded bloom and pull it off of the stem. It is better if you take the time to cut and remove the stem along with the spent bloom. Cut down to just above the first detectible new branch (lateral) and it speeds the growth of the lateral and future blooms. I have found from experience that the "quick and easy" way of removing just the bloom by simply pulling it off the stem can result in a very painful sting to the palm of your hand when, in your haste, you failed to detect the bee in the center of the bloom. When you make the same mistake at least once every season, you should

learn to deadhead the proper way and stick to it.

Spray for fungus

This time of the year, with the cool nights and warm days, your garden is being subjected to nightly, heavy dews. On one hand that is very beneficial because it gently provides water to the dahlias. On the other hand, it provides the perfect breeding ground for many fungal diseases that weaken or even kill some of your plants. One particular fungus that appears now is powdery mildew. Rubigan will



© American Dahlia Society

Powdery mildew, late stage

defeat powdery mildew. Also check more common fungicides found at your garden center store for defeating



powdery mildew. An -

other common fungus appearing now is known as leaf spot. It initially appears on the lower leaves but works itself up the plant and can rapidly spread to adjacent plants. It doesn't seem to have any long-term effect on the plants but is unsightly. Captan or Cleery are two generally available fungicides that combat this condition. Again, it is a matter of keeping your plants as healthy as possible before their roots go into storage or hibernation.

Fertilizing

We recommend not giving nitrogen to dahlias past mid to late August. The earlier need to produce lush growth is replaced by a need to concentrate on blooms and roots. Having said that, I have found over the years that spraying the plants with water soluble potassium nitrate (a mix close to 15-0-35) helps significantly strengthen the stems. Supposedly this nitrogen is needed to make the potassium work more efficiently and therefore is not a contradiction of the first sentence

and therefore is not a contradiction of the first sentence in this paragraph. Fertilizers containing phosphorous help dahlias produce blooms and enhance bloom color therefore we will use something like Morbloom, 0-10-10, until the killing frost arrives. This particular product comes in a liquid form and can be found at Hastings and Habersham nurseries. A mixture of 1 TBS @ gallon of water will keep your blooms lively and strong and their colors quite bright. A dosage of common Epsom salts also is thought to boost bloom color and darken the foliage at the same time. Continuing to feed dahlias with potassium is thought to help tuber development and hence guarantee better storage. Enjoy Take time at least once every day to just look at your blooms and marvel at their beauty. Share them with your friends and strangers. Every time you give away dahlias I bet you will receive a big, hardy smile. BK

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

ANN TUCKER

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

WE ARE SO GLAD YOU HAVE DECIDED TO JOIN THE DAHLIA SOCIETY OF GEORGIA. WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AT OUR MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES.

2008 NATIONAL DAHLIA SHOW

The National Dahlia Show this year was extraordinary to say the least. The venue of Longwood Gardens was just a most wonderful place to visit in it's own right but having the national show there was something to behold. The week-end started out with a reception on Thursday night with it being held in the reflecting pool in the main conservatory of Longwood Gardens. The pool had been drained for the



function. We also had our banquet there on Saturday night. See below. On Sunday morning the pool had water in it once again. Friday was tour day



so two busloads went to Philadelphia and toured the Historical district seeing Constitution Hall and the Liberty Bell as the main attractions. We also visited a couple of public gardens in Philadelphia. Saturday was show day and the judging took place in the morning and after that a lovely luncheon, again in the reflecting pool. Saturday night was the awards banquet where Buddy & Kelly Dean, North Carolina, took a number of awards, Allen Haas and Stan Hart from North Carolina received an award each and Tom Spain from North Carolina took the top monetary award of \$1,000 for the best Boeke introduction, Bo-Joy.

A number of members from the Southern States



Societies and North Carolina came to the show. Attending from Georgia were Brian & Linda Killingsworth, Dan & Paula Pinholster, Jim & Val Grotwold, John & Regina Kreiner and our member that lives in Arkansas, Mary Saintjohn. We helped her celebrate her birthday at our Friday night dinner. Attending from Tennessee were John & Mary Wheeler, Herb Pace, John & Rose Newsom. Alabama was represented by Don & Millie Ehrett, Ed & Cathy Whitfield, and Jeff Pace. From North Carolina were Allen & Debra Haas, Buddy & Kelly Dean, Stan & Lora Hart, Tom Spain & Tanya Gulga and Isabel & Charles Garren. The venue was the **best** and the show was wonderful. We thank the Philadelphia Dahlia Society for putting on such an excellent show and we are looking forward to the next National Show at Longwood Gardens.



BEST BLOOM IN SHOW BARGLAY BLUSH B-FD-PK





L TO R; REGINA KREINER, MARY SAINTJOHN, DAN & PAULA PINHOLSTER, VAL & JIM GROTWOLD, LINDA & BRIAN KILLINGSWORTH



SHINKYOKU NX-PR AND FERN IRENE WL-Y



GLASS PUMPKIN DISPLAY AT LONGWOOD GARDENS



BLOOMS ON THE SHOW TABLE READY TO BE JUDGED I N PHILADELPHIA



RIVAL & BAYSTATE ANGEL IN A WINNING BASKET