

AL & MICHELLE KAAS

2026 Inductees

Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers Hall of Fame

The Snohomish County Dahlia Society would like to nominate long-time members Alan and Michelle Kaas for the Federation Hall of Fame. Over the years Al, with Michelle at his side, have put in countless hours as ambassadors to the dahlia, specifically in the Pacific Northwest.

In the early 2000s, Al and Michelle were stricken with dahlia fever and are still ailing today. At the time of infection, the Kaases were also passionate Orchid growers and belonged to the Seattle Orchid Society. Being flower gardeners already, dahlias were not a far jump for them and as Al was an extremely competitive person, he fit right in among the exhibition crowd. Al quickly became a proficient dahlia judge and worked his way up to senior judge with ease. Michelle enjoyed the sidelines better as a clerk but definitely knows her stuff and is often seen clerking the ADS bench.

Once Al became a Senior Judge, he became a member of the NW supplemental classification committee for the Federation and went on to take on the chair position in 2023. When he moved to Eastern WA, he was not able to attend as many shows so did not continue as the chair. Through the years, he has been an active member in three dahlia societies: PSDA, SCDS, and NCWDS. In 2008 he was the president of PSDA for 2 years and is currently the president of NCWDS. As president, he strives to uphold the standards of exhibition dahlias along with welcoming new members in hopes they too become dahlia show enthusiasts. To encourage the competitive world of dahlias farther, Al has also taken on the task of teaching judging classes to one of the Federation's newest (and most distant) clubs in Idaho: SWIDS. And beginning in 2026, Al has taken on co-teaching the candidate to accredited class alongside Linda Holmes-Cook.

As hybridizers, Al and Michelle started Maks dahlias around 2010 with a focus on exhibition dahlias. Currently they have 23 ADS-recognized dahlias, seven of which were awarded Dudley metals. Their attention to form is very recognizable in their originations, but beauty also holds high merit as they want their cultivars to stand the test of time with all dahlia lovers. The Kaases have also stood the test of time in the dahlia world and certainly belong in the hall of fame.