



NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, August 10 @ 7:30 @ 9th and Lincoln.

PROGRAM - NEXT MEETING: August 10, @7:30 @ 9th and Lincoln. Program: **NOVICE ONLY MINI SHOW!** You may enter up to two in each category: AA, A, B, BB, Min, BA, MBA, P, O, S, MS, Col, NX, NXO, WL, An, Pe and ST, x3 and x5. Ca\$h prize\$! Doors open by 6:30 PM for set up. Remember your blooms delight and educate us all so bring on the lessons! Please fill out an entry form with the 4 digit number. Let the games begin!



WRIGLING DIRT MAGIC:



Mike Petenari, graduate of the 12 week Master Composter Program in San Mateo County, showed us how he won first place in the compost division at the Fair. There are 5 major components to a successful compost pile: carbon, nitrogen, water, oxygen and YOU. Carbon comes from woody, dry or brown plant parts. Nitrogen comes from green stuff like leaves, vegetable peelings and coffee grounds. You should add 3-5 times more carbon than greens. Add as much water as needed to keep your pile "as wet as a wrung out sponge." The sweet smelling microbes need oxygen to process decaying stuff as well as to eat anaerobic microbes (the stinky ones). Mike recommends turning your pile with a turning fork not a shovel to destroy as few of these precious aerobic microorganisms as possible. The 3 stages of turning dead dirt into live soil are 1) Bacterial dominance cauterized by HEAT up to 145 degrees; 2) Fungal dominance, characterized by near ambient temperatures; and 3) finished dark brown fine particles. Finished compost can be used as potting soil, soil amendment, or turned into compost tea.

Mike brought us both the huge Biostack Compost Bin with its t-tier design for easy harvesting and turning, as well as his Wriggly Wranch Worm Bin full of thousands of wee red worms (888 469 6767 for ordering from Triformis Corporation). Mike's vermiculture thrives on top of soil but under a mulch of shredded coconut husks. His one pound of worms eat 1/2 pound of food daily, although in the summer time his digestive beasts eat more than in winter. Mike recommends keeping compost bins in the shade or the north side of ones home. Mike adjures, "No citrus, because worms breathe through their skins and citrus irritates them." No meat, dairy or animal feces.



GENEROSITY OF FRIENDS:

Major thanks again to the DCS members who shared their marvelous summer bounty-you hold our society together! Ron and Joann's entire box of Meyer Lemons disappeared like a long slurp of lemonade. Jim's forest of tall heirloom tomato plants traveled off to grateful homes. Elsie donated Karl's aluminum carrying antique. How we loved gobbling up Baker Bill's poppy seed cake and Leo's chocolate chip cookies. Thanks

to Pat, Cathy and John for the bounty of cherries. Their box of lemons notwithstanding, the Dingwalls also baked a chocolate cake for us. Scrumptious!



WAIT - THAT'S NOT A DAHLIA:



Ken and Marilyn recently harvested this monster ??? Can you identify it?



FIRST GLIMPSE OF 2010 GLORY:

Tinnee's bouquet of collarette seedlings demonstrated again the diversity of dahlia genetics. DSCer's queried Deborah as to the names of Holly Hill Spider Woman, HH Purely Purple, Cristina, Creekside Volcano and Weston Spanish Dancer



amongst others. But Baker Bill's humongous Mabel Ann his utterly lacinated AnaMari just blew us all away. Wow! How we love seeing magnificent specimens of our favorite flower.



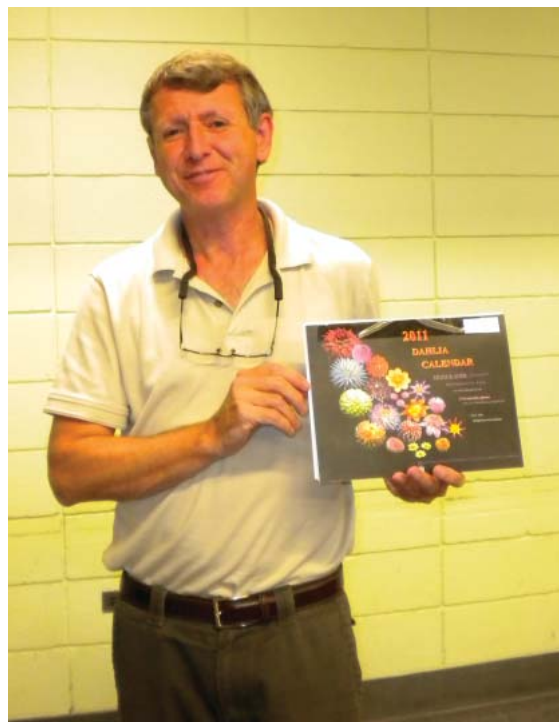
Cristina, HH Purely Purple

PHOTOG PHENOM:

Fresh off the press, Franck Avril's lavish Dahlia Calendars will be available at our next meeting for the special price of \$10. Franck will also be sharing his photographic expertise at the San Leandro meeting, August 17, 7 PM, San Leandro Library, 300 Estudillo Ave, 94577. Those attending should bring their cameras and manuals to learn even snazzier tricks. Franck's cards and calendars can also be purchased at the Conservatory of Flowers Gift Shop near the Dahlia Dell.

SHOW TIME!:

The San Francisco Floribunda, at the Hall of Flowers, Aug. 21-11, opens its doors at 8 PM Friday for staging. Your help setting up tables on Friday at noon and taking them down on Sunday at 5 would be most welcome. At 9 A.M. on Saturday clerks are needed to accompany judging teams and to write down the winners for our computer compilers. This is a great opportunity to get to shoulder bloomerati and further understand the dahlia aesthetic. Other DSC volunteers are needed on both days to answer the public's questions and to encourage membership in DSC. Please help! Our show runs 10-4 so we need charming hosts all these hours.



GOOD? BETTER? BEST?:

On July 31st at the Church of Christ in San Leandro, John and Joanna Morton hosted the annual judging seminar, including a sumptuous lunch. Lou Paradise (aided and abetted by John Morton in the Vanna White role) schooled novices and experts alike in the mysteries of dahlia perfection.

The seminar was organized along judging rituals, moving from FORM/28 points (remember – C U S P – consistency - uniformity - symmetry – proportion are the watch words) to COLOR/22 points to SUBSTANCE/15 points to STEM and FOLIAGE/both 10 points to BLOOM POSITION, UNIFORMITY, & DISTINCTION/all 5 points followed by a lively discussion on pollen (how many rows of pollen for which forms).



Two more judging categories were discussed – FLORIFEROUS NESS and DISTINCTION which are included when judging seedlings. To illustrate the procedure, Lou Paradise, Kevin Larkin and Roy Stier gave an example of a trial garden judging using a seedling developed by Curtis Maxwell. They measured and poked and prodded (gently) the three blooms and compared the ray floret color to the panels in the ADS Color Guide and explained how they arrived at their scores.

Finally, a number of blooms were set out for the attendees to try their hand at judging. All in all, it was a fun, instructive day of immersion in dahlia lore.



(Submitted by roving reporter Devi Josephs)

P.R. POTENTIAL:

Our persistent Pat caught The Chronicle's attention. After interviewing Dell growers, Lance photographed volunteers in situ. We hope the article will be published the Wednesday before our Big Show. Cross your petals. Meanwhile, visit.



FULLY FLEDGED:

The first of 70 show dahlias bloom at the newest public dahlia display garden at Cabrillo and 39th. Congratulations to Devorah for promoting the project, securing a drip irrigation grant, donating all the plants, and organizing sod cutters, compost dumpers, and doggie doo doo diverters. What a way to turn an unsightly spot into a joy for all.



DELL DUOS:

Looks like smiles are blooming along with dahlias at the dell.

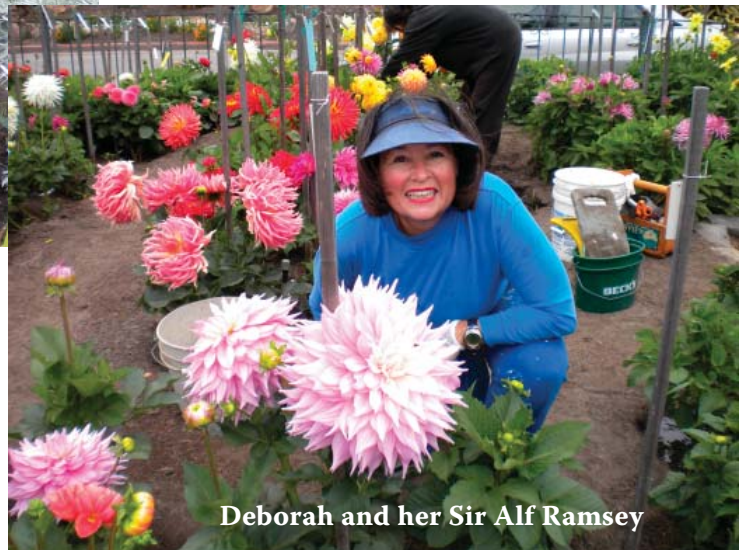
Sue and Devorah disbud and deadhead



Frank and David play follow the leader



Deborah and her Sir Alf Ramsey



AWESOME AUGUST:

Your plants should be at their very best this month. Invite friends over to oohh! Go visit other gardens to aaahh! Take bouquets to your library (with a show announcement) or to your dentist/doctor/acupuncturist. Spread your beauties around. Just for fun, enter the Novice Only mini show and enter at least a couple blooms in our Really Big Show. Check out the photo sections (click here?) and enter some pix. Take photos now to aid your memory during the mud months. I have been spraying a cocktail of Greenlight Super Bloom, Hoist (for mildew) and malethion (for wretched caterpillars and aphids). Prophylactic application of anti-mildew agents proves more effective than trying to eradicate the white powder once it has infected your garden. Check each name against the ADS Classification Book to make sure you have the right moniker with cultivar. While cleaning out the bottom 6" of your dahlia stalk, try rooting some of the wee branches you pull off in 4"x4" containers for pot roots for next year—great insurance. Last but not least, come to our BIG SHOW Aug. 21-22, help host, learn new dahlias, and expand your wish list.



John Morton's magnificent garden

Yours in Dirt,

Deborah

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Editor: Deborah Dietz
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Originally Organized
In 1917
In San Francisco

Dahlia was adopted as the
Official Flower of San Francisco
On October 4, 1926
By its Board of Supervisor

Wishing you had access to the past 12 months of dahlia doings? [Click here for past newsletters](#)