



NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, 8 January @7:30 @ 9th and Lincoln

PROGRAM: Devi and DJ share their experiences starting public display gardens of competition dahlias. Who will bring yummys?

NEW INTRODUCTIONS:



Frank obtained and Deborah projected the ADS New Introductions for 2011. Wow! Some great looking new dahlias! DJ assumed the Recording Secretary position, expressing his thanks to Pat for having done such a splendid job for so long. We loved noshing on Bill's chocolate rum cake and the Dingwalls cheese cake. Thanks to Pat for her scrumptious Ghirardelli chocolates. Many members renewed their \$10 DSC and \$20 ADS dues. Have you?

Dues information and Membership application



IN MEMORIAM

We lost our gracious Thelma Cornish on 1-11-11. Long-time secretary for DSC, Thelma invariably



brought scrumptious treats to each meeting and told wonderful stories in her signature English accent wearing her signature florally patterned clothes. Thelma and Lou enjoyed growing and showing their wonderful day-li-ahs.



PACIFIC SOUTHWEST DAHLIA CONFERENCE:

February 26-27 at the Beach Resort in Monterey. This is where all members from all 7 dahlia societies in California confabulate. Learn about how dahlias get their official forms/colors/sizes changed. Where do medals come from and for what cultivars will they be awarded? What's the latest about our national show in August and how can you help? This is a great opportunity to hobnob with bloomerati and participate in a great raffle. *Conference information and registration form*

BIG DIG 2011:

Our epic exhumation began even before the weekend. The Thursday prior Erik, Vince and Deborah pulled out 30 clumps to “prime the dividing pump” so there would be material for master dividers right from the opening gate. Which is another story. We have a new supervisor for Section 3, Zack Taylor, who came bright and early to facilitate all things dahlia. Without keys to strategic buildings, Zack, nevertheless, mustered tables and shovels from other sections while gardeners Steve and Gino—on their days off—came in to unlock the compound. What support from the Park Staff! Mike, though caught in the throes of a crummy cold, delivered almost 30 clumps of prime A and AA roots from his commercial dahlia farm in Half Moon Bay. The first to arrive and the last to leave each day, Dick Meyers trucked in buckets for the Bleach Bench. Tinnee hooked up shop lights over the label table while below Pat laid out “work stations” for scribes. In



bright yellow rain gear, Banana Man (Craig) rinsed off the

clumps. With Sisyphean determination, Bobby ferried up all the teardrop flats with seemingly endless wheelbarrow trips. Meanwhile on the hillside, Frank displayed distinct cage envy: he marveled over how simply Mark snipped open the plastic zip ties on Tinnee's invented nifty jiffy gopher cages to liberate the lovely tuber mass within. Avis, Larry, Gwen, Chris and Pat pulled out the caged clumps. Terry transported the masses to Banana Man.



MORE BIG DIG 2011:



HOSPITALISTS RECRUITED FOR TUBER TRIAGE:

Under Erik's watchful tutelage, a cadre of radiologists earned glowing reviews for performing surgery—on dahlia masses. The cutest band of kids from Marin Country Day School and their parents attacked the tear drop with shovels of all sizes. Later they pounced on weeds with the same vigor. Manfully, 8-year old Nickolas wheeled all the hillside flats up to the gardeners' court. "Probably 14 trips," he gestimated. What a hero!



Amidst this frenzy of activity, SF Parks honcho, Gloria Koch-Gonzalez, arrived to marvel about both

the number and the zeal of the volunteers. (Somehow our DigOut had hit the whole park's radar.) Tinnee explained that volunteers came from all over-- Palo Alto to Novato--devoting 3-17 hours each just on this one weekend.



FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD:

Lucking out with DRY weather, we nonetheless battled cool temperatures. To combat the chill, John and Donna brought crock pots full of chili and homemade chicken noodle soup. They brought shredded cheese and onions to garnish and a red-checked tablecloth add homey class to the locker room. Craig installed his camping Coleman stove to heat up black bean and bacon soup. MMMMMM, it felt good just to hold the bowl and warm up hands. Staunch volunteers browsed on Tinee's bagels and schemer, on Deborah's salad, and on Craig's homemade bread. The hordes descended upon Pizza Express's 5 pies, including the ever-so-politically correct Vegetarian Supreme with a whole sheet cake from the Mani's and Chinese pastries for dessert. Tangerines and apples fueled us both days.





BLESSED BE THE TWO TIMERS!

Early enough to see their breaths in the brisk morning air, Erik and Deborah opened the gates for on Sunday. John Dale, decked out in water chaps and hazmat gloves, manned the Bleach Bench for a second day running.



Pat again stepped up to the “the showers” dousing off clumps. On pedestrians-only Sunday, Devorah and Anne hiked in carrying their dividing tools. Devi deserves extra kudos not just because she divided both days, but because she did this after completely processing her backyard tubers AND all the tubers from her new public Cabrillo Park Display Garden. Many wonderful volunteers from One Brick attacked the remaining weeds. Led by Dick Gale, they turned over the soil and raked both the Tear Drop and the hillside to Zen perfection. Cathy, Daisy and Lauren brought surgery experience from their own gardens, exquisitely severing our roots.





THRICE IS NICE:

THRICE IS NICE: To finish labeling and sulphuring the final 60 flats, Pat, Tinnee, Craig and Deborah returned on the following rainy Tuesday to complete DigOut 2011. All these tubers will dry in stacks for a week and then be stored in bags of vermiculite in a cool (but not COLD) spot until mid-February when they'll be brought to warmer places for germination.



POETRY FROM THE HEART:

Devi reports: there is a very old man, Mr. James Ma, almost ninety years old who lives directly across the street from the playground. He rides his wheelchair into the playground every day, rain or shine, gets up and slowly walks the perimeter of the playground for his exercise. When I am out in the dahlia garden working, he always stops by for a chat and comments on the dahlias. His daughter wrote this poem for him and for the dahlias and for the mother and wife they lost last year:



Dahlia

by Clara Hsu

Dahlia, you tubular fireball,
sun storm velvet
a fairy's powder puff.

Dahlia blooming,
like young Mexican girls
twirling their frocks
at a fiesta.

The old man across the street
sits in his chair and rubs his face,
stretches his arms up and out
bends and straightens his knees
a hundred times a day.

He watches you
bold and blushing in the light rain.

He counts you
when the wind is kind.

He regards you
because you remind him of love.

He picks you
to accompany his silence.

Dahlia, if you were a woman
he would hold your fullness
in his hands
and taste you with his tongue
and call you by a different name
as if she had never left.



FUSSING IN FEBRUARY:

Now is the time to take your pot roots into the greenhouse or a warm window and give them @2 table-spoons full of water and watch for green sprouts to appear. If you have dahlias already growing in your greenhouse, it's time to start taking some cuttings with your friendly Tuber Sale in mind. I remember when Oscar and Rita Robucks used to bring Dixie cups with Jessica cuttings to our March and April



meetings. Check your garden's ph. Ideally you'd like it between 6.8 and



7. Add your mulch, leaves, grass clippings, egg shells, coffee grounds, banana peels, and chicken manure now. Weed! Taking out the few weeds now means less multiply by April planting. Check your tubers. If they seem a bit damp, add a handful of absorbent kitty litter. If a tuber is squishy decide whether you should try saving it in a milk carton with soil or just tossing it out. I have my milk cartons stacked in my loft (the warmest part of the Maus Haus). The tubers do not need light until they germinate—usually between 62-68 degrees. Once they have sprouted, I pop them into a warm window or the greenhouse. Remember—no water until you see green! Register to attend the Pacific Southwest Dahlia Conference. Try growing from dahlia seed—maybe you'll win the genetic lottery. Negotiate with your friends for

tubers and cuttings of your favorites from last year. See if your local coffee shop will save you milk cartons now in exchange for flowers during the summer. Please plan to share your excess tubers and cuttings with your benevolent Dahlia Society of California on the first Saturday in April. This is our only fundraiser!



Yours in Dirt,
Deborah

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