



NEXT MEETING: February 14, **Valentines Day** @ 7:30 time @ 9th and Lincoln

PROGRAM: Frank will bring Slides of ADS New Introductions. Come prepared to drool. We'll also have a group discussion on how to improve our soil before planting. Who will bring goodies to celebrate?



DIGOUT 2012, THE BEST IN 20 YEARS!



Manicuring the Tear Drop - many hands

Why? #1 The phenomenally magnificent weather. We needed sun screen not slickers. Because we had no rain for the last 2 months, the soil yielded easily; the roots stayed dry with almost no rot.

#2 Organization. On the Thursday before, Erik brought doughnuts to the gardeners and Conservatory staff to thank them in advance for allowing us to use their enclave for our activities. Zack, in charge of the entire Pan Handle and Valley, promised that the big truck would work elsewhere so we could use the entire courtyard. Over several evenings before, Orlando devised "ethnic" bleach baskets. On Friday the Express Pizza delivery man got a map from Deborah with X marking the non-GPS spot to make sure he

could find us whilst his pies were still hot. Craig hung lights over the label table at 8 am. Deborah and Erik set up the work areas by 8:30. Mike S. brought early clumps so master dividers could practice their arts immediately from 9 am onwards.



First comes the oh so gentle extraction . . .

#3 DSCers galore! Dick arrived BEFORE 8 am. The Manis arrived almost as early on both days, burdened with coffee makers, chili and soup. Deborah built great salads both days. Tinnee donated bagels and cream cheese. Mary Ann and Erik provided lots of cookies.

Someone whipped up outstanding chicken salad. Our benevolent DSC provided fantastic pizzas both days. Roger brought boxes of "Naked Lady" amaryllis to reward the faithful. Valeria studied everything: digging, dividing, bleaching, filling milk cartons and labeling: an instant renaissance dahlianeer!



. . . then a good tuber shower . . .



... followed by a short drive for tubers ...

#4 Veterans! Craig reprised his filthy Rainman job. Terry kept him stocked with dirt-filled clumps and Sarah lifted them off as fast as they appeared rinsed. Craig confided that he would have taken more breaks but T&S just kept plying him with tubers! Third Grade Nickolas returned to the traces, hauling over 40 wheel barrels full of roots from the Dell to the courtyard. While Roger, Mike and Annie rarely came to meetings, they divided diligently all day. Curtis from San Leandro not only divided all day Saturday, but imparted his art to several tyros. Amy and Mitzu quickly

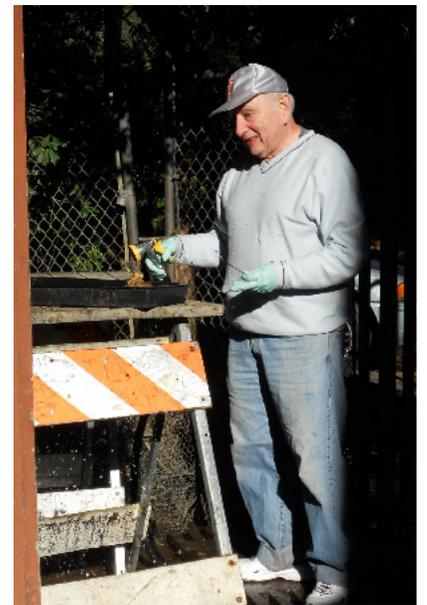


... or toddlers ...



... to the dividers ...

became pros under his fine tutelage. Daisy returned from last year with her surgical gear. Re-donning his hazmat chaps and long gloves, John D. manfully bucked the Bleach Bench another year. Webmaster Mike drove down from Napa to help anywhere. Deborah again brought boxes of "DigOut" towels, even laundering them over Saturday night. Shelly guided the Label Table newbies, keeping almost abreast of John's newly Chloroxed flats. What synchrony!



... then another shower ...



... a nice bleach bath ...

#5 Innovation. Tinnee's elegant gopher cage design readily yielded lovely clumps with three simple snips of the cable ties. Mike plied his electric dremel to clumps saying, "It's almost too easy."

#6 More volunteers than ever before. Thanks to Mary Ann who organized the Wells Fargo crew—always intelligent, professional and unflagging. Thanks to the other Mary Ann for posting on the Parks and Rec website which got picked up by the Cheap Fun Things To Do in SF website. Indeed, our DigOut proved very fun and



... and finally the label table. What a trip!

remarkably cheap! One Brick brought so many volunteers we could Zen weed and rake the Hillside and Teardrop to meditational perfection.

Here are some of the many who made 2012 the Dig Out of Dig Outs!!!

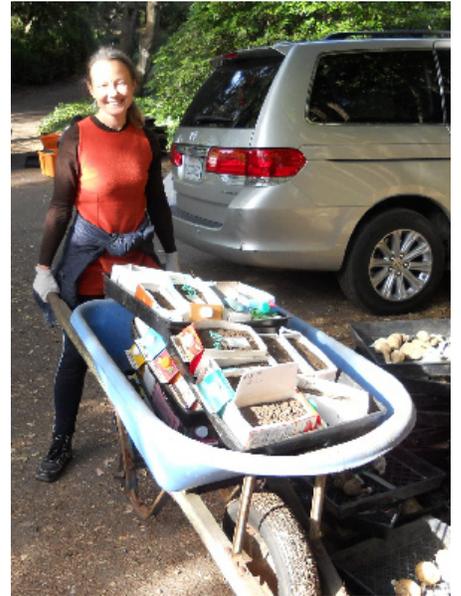


Jason, visiting from Korea, found out about the Dig Out on the web.









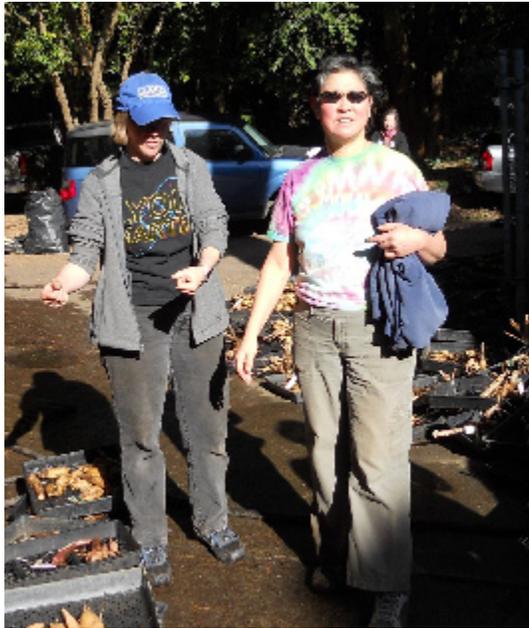




PHOTO COMPETITION:

For our Tuber Sale announcement we need an enticing digital format photo. Please bring a hard copy of your picture to our February meeting so we can vote on our favorite. Winner receives \$20 worth of cuttings or tubers at our sale.

GET YER CUSTOMIZED APRONS!

Peg announced that so many people admired her snazzy apron at our holiday party, that she will customize one for you, too. Just give her a 2011 National Show shirt and \$25 and a couple weeks' time. Peg: Ivapegasus@gmail.com



PSWC WIKI MEET:

Sat. Feb 25 somewhere in San Jose, we'll have a one-day Pacific Southwest Dahlia Conference beginning @9:30 am. Cost, location, and topics to be blitzed out on email as soon as they are disclosed.

GENEROSITY OF FRIENDS:

Wow! The holiday spirit overflowed into our January meeting starting out with a spectacle as Peg marched in with DJ's flaming birthday cake. Pat brought my favorite Florentines, Russian cakes and almond pretzels.



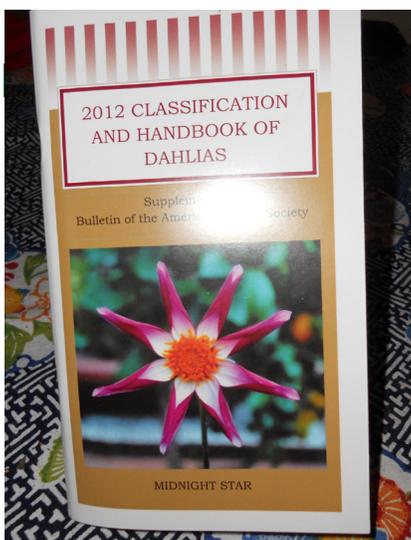
Birthday boys Dick . . .

donated a whole shopping bag of bearded iris. What beneficence! Hope you are all equally inspired for February.

Frank donated a huge bowl of Almond Roca. Marina's cheese and crackers, the Dingwall's cookies, and the strawberry licorice were gobbled up. How we loved Gino's white cake and the Mani's multiple types of cheese cake, chocolate truffles and coffee. Who brought the yummy bunt cake? Warren



. . . and DJ



COVER KUDOS:

Take a closer look at your new ADS Classification Book. Note the remarkable photo of Midnight Star on the cover. Each year there is a competition for the best pic of the Stanley Johnson winner, the dahlia which wins the most awards in past year. The talented photographer who captured this winning image is our own DJ! Congratulations. With his special green pen, he offers to autograph anyone's Book at our next meeting.

DUES DUE:

Please submit your \$10 for DSC and your \$24 for single ADS and \$27 for ADS family memberships. The membership form can be found at www.sfdahlias.org/aboutdsc/membership Send it to Joe Norton for Dahlia Society of California. 46 Seward St. San Francisco, CA 94114

REMEMBRANCE OF DIGOUTS PAST:

At our January meeting, Deborah shared pix from 8 years of DigOuts in Golden Gate Park including fun ones from this year. So many years Thelma and JoAnn had run the Label Table, even moving inside by the potbellied stove during the rain, but stalwart throughout. Ron had always tackled the toughest clumps. We missed them and celebrated ALL the great DigOuts since 1993.



FIGURE OUT FEBRUARY:

Keep weeds down and cover crops happy. Costco has Sluggo, organic anti-snail dope, safe from kitties, dogs, birds and raccoons, on sale. Try putting a cordon sanitaire around your plot so snails die getting in and die getting out. By planting time, you have a dahlia safe zone. Start negotiating with prospective tuber/plant swappers or go on line to order something new. Plant some tubers in milk cartons and place them in a warm sunny spot. Do NOT water until you see green sprouts. Try sprouting some dahlia seeds. DJ and Tinnee recommend putting seeds between wet paper towels. As your seeds germinate, carefully



transfer them to a very "light" planting soil: half soil and half perlite or vermiculite. Spritz but do not water heavily. The milk cartons in my loft are percolating along: 9 up so far. I add @ 1 tablespoon of water to them every few days; since the milk cartons have no holes in the bottom, I do not want them to be boggy. There are several suggestions on how to keep your tubers stored and happy until March. Put them in baggies with large-grain vermiculite (now available in non-asbestos), wood shavings (like for guinea pigs), peat moss (the acidity seems to help stem the rot), or just plain sand. I favor the vermiculite; Lou P, guru of gurus, uses shavings; Sue G. gets great results with sand. Some people seal the baggies; I don't. However, a certain curious cat got too involved in my garage and brought a bunch of bags crashing down, spilling tubers everywhere. Having just spent 6 hours bagging them by cultivar type, I utterly collapsed and wished I'd sealed the bags after all. Some people wrap each tuber in plastic wrap! I tried this and mine rotted; but others swear by it. Obviously tubers must be fairly dry for Saran Wrap. I put my bags into cardboard boxes by size: A's and AA's, B's, Open centered etc. The Juuls put their bags in 5 gallon plastic buckets. Many commercial growers put theirs in redwood boxes filled with vermiculite, shavings, sand or a combination thereof. The most important thing is: cool but not cold spot. I use my garage which in San Francisco rarely gets below 40 or above 50. Roger puts his under his house. Pat caches in her basement.



Yours in Dirt,

Deborah

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Page layout: Mike Willmarth

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