



NEXT MEETING: April 10, @ 7:30 time @ 9th and Lincoln

PROGRAM: Deborah's pictures take us through a year of dahlia growing. Invite your friends, neighbors and family. Bring any extra cuttings, plants or tubers for sale to your fellow DCSers. Who will bring goodies to share???



NEW INTROS, NEW DESIRES:

Frank brought us the cd of ADS 2012 New Introductions compiled by Claudia Biggs. Gasps ensued from Beep Beep, a B IC PR, and Gitts' Crazy, both from Swan Island (\$25!!!); Carl's Snow Queen, a jaunty BB LC W from Probanzanski; Tahoma Stardust, BB FD LB from Connell; and River's Novelty, NX, from Eugene Kenyon. Ask Frank if you'd like to check out the CD from the DSC library to ponder the new wonders in your leisure.

MINI DIGS:

A few DSCers lifted over 100 clumps from the Warden's yard instead of rototilling them under. Devorah, DJ,

Valeria, dentist Mike and John G. loved the fresh scones Marilyn made us. On a busman's holiday, LA Prez, Bob, dug in to help. Both groups enjoyed lovely weather. In fact, we had

so little rain, that the second day, Orlando used his air compressor to clean the roots; we used no water at all. Deborah planted some in milk cartons and stored the rest in a combination of vermiculite and peat moss awaiting our tuber sale.



more MINI DIGGERS:



PHOTO CHALLENGE:

Lou P. announced that Elvira won the Stanley Johnson Award for 2011 and thus will grace the cover of the ADS Classification "Bible" next year. The contest begins now for the best photo of Elvira. Lou needs actual paper 4x6" photos which include your name, address, e-mail and telephone number. He hopes you're creative, because Elvira's such a teeny champion. Details and entry forms are in the March ADS Bulletin.

TUBER SALE VOLUNTEER LIST:

As in the past, those who have volunteered with DigOut, in the Dell, at our Show, or in the kitchen, have the opportunity to help set up our fabulous Tuber and Cutting Sale. Our sale won't begin until 9:30 so we may get more than the usual 20+ minutes of presale before the Public swamps in. Elsie will pass out the sign up sheet at our March meeting or you can call Deborah: 415 816 2118 to see if you qualify. We also need help setting up tables and putting out cuttings on the Friday at 11 am before our sale.

GENEROSITY OF FRIENDS:

Thanks to Amy and Mitzu for volunteering for Kitchen Duty AND bringing cloud-light profiteroles! Thanks to Marina for healthy oranges. The Dingwalls brought both lemon and peanut butter cookies. Peg gaily distributed Valentine's chocolates and suckers. Lou C. brought smart chips (?). Thanks to the Manis for the 2x2's and the pvc tubes. Devorah announced that membership in DSC begins each January no matter when you signed up the previous year.

DSC FLOWERS OF THE YEAR:

Juul's Amber and Elvira are DSC's Flowers of the Year. Look for them at our tuber sale. Some people call these their "challenge flower" because it really tests how well the individual can grow compared to everyone else: whose soil, attention, pinching, timing, lighting, fertilizing, protecting, and judicious disbudding all culminate in the BEST BLOOM. Good luck!

TUBER SWAPPING ETIQUETTE:

Just to keep things clear, our simple rule is that if a tuber or plant comes into our meeting room it is FOR SALE. It should be paid for before it leaves our room. However, if you've arranged to give or receive plants or tubers, do so outside of our meeting room, such as in the parking lot or even at one of your homes. Sometimes tubers can be bargained for. I once swapped over 60 tubers for a single Goshen Yellow and came away very pleased with the bargain. Sometimes chocolate or wine can become excellent inducements or the loan of a DVD, or the promise to help plant, or photos or.....get creative. Talk to the people who've had great wins at the shows. Be open to new growers who need to upgrade their stock. Continued communication creates a better dahlia community.

GREAT MINDS DEVELOP SIMPLE SOLUTIONS:

Mike and Martha have been experimenting by planting tubers in plastic strawberry boxes. The advantages? Transparent so you can see the roots developing; well drained; easily stackable until sprouted and easily stored when done; easily cleaned; and cheap.



GREAT MINDS (cont.):

John has transformed his old golf cart garage into a germination hothouse and hopes to make bunches of cuttings for our tuber sale. John crafted an army of 90 gro-buckets with water reservoirs at the bottom and insulated them so his dahlias won't fry in the hot Novato summer.



Meanwhile DJ scored a huge seedling bed in a community garden near his Beresford Park Dahlia Display Garden. We hope for many amazing new dahlias from DJ's seedling factory.



MARCHING ALONG:

Move your tubers from their cool (but not cold) slumber to a warm (but not hotter than 75 degree) spot. This will induce your tubers to germinate. We would love to have all our sale tubers proudly flaunting little sprouts thus proving viability. Toss out any rotten ones. If a tuber is squishy but has a sprout, pop it in a pot with dirt; you might be able to still get a plant out of it. After all, the dahlia is already growing; it doesn't need its rotten tuber/storage container any more. Try making a few cuttings with your early birds. I like to wait until my sprouts have 3 sets of leaves before I cut them off at the tuber. Lou L. and Devi dip in rooting hormone; I don't. The evidence is mixed on whether this does any good. Use a very loose potting substance. Corralitos, Aztec, and Alan Haas use oasis wedges (floral foam); I like 1/3 soil, 1/3 perlite or vermiculite, and 1/3 sand. I water once and then merely mist or spritz for the next couple weeks. Lou L plugs his cuttings into damp soil and covers them with a tent of Saran Wrap, places them in his bookcase greenhouse, and does not touch them for 3 weeks. Now is the last chance to add "hot" chicken manure to your patch as it takes at least 6 weeks to "cool" off to the point that tender new roots are safe in it. Remember Kevin says that cow/horse manure contains very few nutrients; it is useful almost solely as tilth, giving soil better integrity. Last chance to dump compost over your plot. To rototill or not? The latest buzz is NOT. Purportedly, rototilling disrupts the microscopic world worse than it does good. I am opting to leave a few of my A's and AA's in the Dell and requesting that they not rototill my area this year. We'll see the results later.....You can be the judge. Try to take a few cuttings off your early sprouting tubers. You can do 4 things with these: 1. Grow and plant in your garden this season. 2. Pop in a 4"x4" and use as an "insurance" pot root for next season. 3. Trade for something wonderful from someone else who's done the same thing. 4. Bring to our meetings or our Tuber sale as a donation.

Yours in Dirt,

Deborah

Dahlia Society of California, Inc., San Francisco, CA -- Copyrighted

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

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