



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

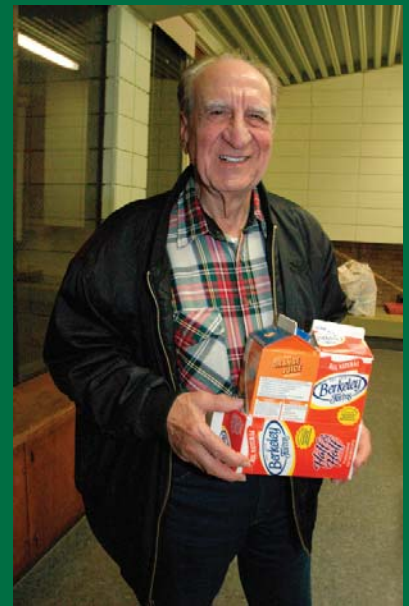


PROGRAM - Jim Barrett demonstrates how to build self-watering containers for growing BIG dahlias and Tinnee brings examples of gopher-protection baskets and nasty EFFECTIVE gopher traps. Mike and Martha will delineate their above ground clay and gopher thwarting strategies. Time to get on the volunteer list for the Tuber and Plant sale. This rewards DSC members who have consistently come to our meetings, who pitched in at DigOut, who helped with our Floribunda or in the Dell, and who bring tubers and/or cuttings. Do bring tubers or cuttings for early March sale. Who will concoct yummies to share with your fellow DSCers?

ADS FORM-ULAS FOR SUCCESS: :



Frank shared Claudia Biggs disc Delightful Dahlias covering the 18 forms recognized by ADS including many open novelties I'd never seen before. (To borrow this or other great discs, check things out with our librarian, Lou L.) Deborah shared DigOuts 2009, 2008 and 2007 with us dredging up some dirty memories. Devorah shared her outstanding compilation of all the volunteer activities surrounding dahliaizing. Alex Woo requested help in the public service announcement he is making on our Dahlia Dell for a class project. Devorah and Greg both brought lovely tubers for sale at \$3 each. Bill brought milk cartons so we could all pot up our newly purchased prizes. Thanks to Elsie for sharing 3 redwood flats and \$2 off admission to the Orchid Show at Ft. Mason coupons. DJ again donated lemons to our midst. Ah, Pat's Florentines just dashed down our mouths.



Devi's poppy cake disappeared too fast. Baker Bill's delicious Marie Calendar pie got devoured.



VOLUNTEER DAY:

SF Parks and Rec threw a party at the Conservatory where each group associated with Golden Gate Park could set up a table to interest potential volunteers. With her alluring PowerPoint slide show on a continuous loop, Devorah and Pat enticed potential dahlia helpers. We hope to see some of them at planting time.

HOT DEEP POT ROOTS:

DJ reports that his new crate-sized pot root beds produce sprouts for cuttings sooner than his individual 3" containers used to. He filled the crate with potting soil, popped it on a bottom heater and sequestered the whole caboodle in his greenhouse. Aren't they burgeoning nicely!



HEART-FELT HAPPINESS:

Joann looked radiant considering all the surgery she's been through. Thrilled with the flowers from DSC, she showed off the flowers from the Cornishes and the card we all wrote her at the last meeting. To surprise her when she got home from the hospital, Ron had painted and recarpeted their home! Keep them in your healthy thoughts.



PACIFIC SOUTHWEST DAHLIA CONFERENCE NEWS

FABULOUS CONFABULATION:

Like a serene swan, the Pacific Southwest Dahlia conference at South San Francisco Embassy Suite appeared to come off perfectly smoothly. No one sees the swan's feet furiously paddling under the surface, nor did attendees see Tinnie, Erik, Pat and Deborah's months of preparation and behind-the-scenes scuttling. Attendees bewondered their rich goodie bags, donated by Safeway and filled with Avril calendars, clip boards, Sloat Garden seed packets, and 2011 National Show note pads. Roy and Betty grew a cutting for each participant. MC, John Morton, tactfully wrangled all the various presenters even jumping in for Karen to disseminate 3 key reports: the Top Twenty Conference Varieties, Winning Cultivars by Class, and 2009 PSC Courts of Honor. Of note, Bode won the most blues and higher in 2009 followed by Peach Delight, Pam Howden and Shea's Rainbow. Congratulations to Lou P. whose Veca Lucia officially ascended to the Hall of Fame last year! When Roy reported on the status of the John Stowell Society, he mentioned free meeting space at a generous mortuary. "Great place for flowers," someone mumbled..... Several items came up during discussion of the National Show in 2011 including the possibility that a radio show might broadcast in person from our venue. (Does anyone have air wave contacts????) Morton confirmed that the Boeke Purse (\$500) awaits the grower who puts a Boeke introduction on the Court of Honor of a national show. If not won in Chattanooga, the prize goes up to \$1000 for our Santa Clara Competition. The Frugal Alchemist, Roy Stier, led the discussion on dahlia culture. Instead of soaking tubers in Clorox, he sprays his tubers with TeraChlor which he feels is gentler on the emergent eyes and as effective in fungal suppression. He plants a cover crop of bell beans, which resemble tiny fava beans. These nitrogenate his patch and are easy to dig under. He and Lou L. agree that Bayer's Tree and Shrub drench uses the key ingredient imidacloprid and is less expensive than Bayer's Two in One or All in One. Roy sprays his new plants almost as soon as he puts them in the ground to prevent thrip, which untreated can stunt growth. With 2 acres of gopher gamboling ground, Bob Papp, President of South Coast Dahlia Society, devised cheap gopher cages: 5 gallon pots with 3-6 extra holes in the edges. He only lost one plant this past year when a wily wretch jumped over the lip of the can and dove downwards to dining pleasure.



MORE PACIFIC SOUTHWEST DAHLIA CONFERENCE NEWS

DAHLIA RING CYCLE:

Dr. Virginia Walbot's seminar on Anthocyanin Synthesis galvanized our group. Her 2 acre "laboratory" of dahlias at Stanford means she works on the most expensive dahlias in the world: worth about \$5,000,000 per dahlia hill! While humans are diploid, dahlias are octoploid and have an amazing habit of jumping chromosomes—which explains their penchant for tremendous diversity. Dr. Walbot cited the fact that while early tubers were probably used for food, 300 years of selective breeding for disease resistance rendered them increasingly more unpalatable. Dr. Walbot reiterated the 10 steps to predicate color in plants. If anything breaks down at any one of these steps, a different color manifests. PH plays a huge role: pigment accumulates in neutral cytoplasm, but only becomes color when transported into an acidic vacuole. Blue is the newest evolutionary step to which dahlias have not yet evolved. Dahlias also evince phenocritical periods, periods of hours or days when something happens. For example, Jessica's red tips depend on the type and amount of light hitting the opening petals. Jessicas who begin to unfurl in early foggy morning light enriched in blue wavelengths lose the red stimulation. If covered in tinfoil during this critical time, some of the red areas turn white. Passing this phenocritical period, the flower will revert back; for example, white petals on Jessica will remain white no matter the quality and quantity of full spectrum light. Dr. Walbot so galvanized our group that they besieged her during Happy Hour and continued to question her all through the banquet.



STILL MORE PACIFIC SOUTHWEST DAHLIA CONFERENCE NEWS LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

Along one side of our meeting room amazing raffle items tempted participants to purchase yet more raffle tickets from Kathy and Devorah. Dick Meyers crafted 3 of his inimitable tool caddies which were filled with gardening implements. Cookbooks galore descended from Shelly's kitchen. Themes for stuffed baskets included cooking, stationery, picnic, drinking and Japanese. Ferncliffe Dahlias donated a \$30 gift certificate and Arrowhead donated a \$40 one. On the other side of our room silent auction items included several New Introduction tubers from Accent Dahlias and Verrone's Dahlias and luscious cuttings from the Stiers. (Ken Greenway's Red Rooster was so contested, people bid up on the back of the sheet!) Jon Dietz donated 16 heirloom tomato plants. Devorah bestowed us a treasure chest full of jewelry! Pat donated 2 tickets to ACT. All during the day and halfway through dinner, stealthy bidders ascended the stage to up their prices. Michael Gesundheit announced early that he would be buying Avril's huge framed print of the forms and colors to use at all the San Leandro functions. He positively glared at other contenders and promptly



rewrote his name whenever someone dared challenge his stakeout. We loved his zeal. When Bob Papp won the right to the first Big Table item, he snapped up one of two \$50 gift certificates from Corralitos Gardens. The second time Erik drew lucky Papp, he chose the Gerda's hand-crocheted afghan to give to Dick Kohlschreiber who remained back in SoCal recovering from an operation. Betty Stier proclaimed to everyone that she would trade anything Roy won for the leopard-pattern hat. To her disappointment, Deborah won the spotted chapeau, but since she'd already won another hat and she only had one head, Deborah donated it to Ms. Fashionable. Once the official raffle ended, the swapping and haggling began. Thanks to Pat's donation of a bottle of wine for every table, this convivial horse-trading proved quite lively.



HEART-FELT HAPPINESS:

Bring your bags or buckets of tubers out from their cool-not-cold dormancy and into a warmer area. They should germinate by our Tuber and Plant sale. I found Bayer's All in One (3 systemics: fertilizer, insecticide, fungicide) at Costco for \$17.89 and promptly mixed a batch to water the dahlias in my greenhouse. Thrip seems ubiquitous, so I surpress it early and often before it gets a chance to stunt my plants' growth. Because early achiever dahlias tend to make spindly stalks, Barry and Marcia came over to help me take cuttings from these greenhouse beauties. Typically cuttings should root in 3-4 weeks, but Roy reports that during this cold spell, his took up to 6 weeks to achieve the same root development. In December I dug up a few prize clumps from GG Dahlia Dell placing them in



5 gallon pots with plenty of dirt around them. More than 8 weeks later I decanted them, finding beautiful eyes for simple dividing. Try this method when you fear too much rain but don't have the time to divide immediately. If you put your clumps in boxes, you can even stack them in the garage until you're ready to process them. Conversely, if you dig up a clump and leave it naked—without dirt or vermiculite or peat moss around it—your clump will shrivel up in a matter of days. I posted a flyer in local coffee shops begging them to save me quart-size milk cartons. Before I explained what I needed them for, Martha Brothers saved me a huge bag, all crushed up to get even more in. So if you try this

solicitation, explain clearly what your purpose is. Last summer I took dahlias in to all the places and people who salvaged milk cartons for me. Several growers also request coffee grounds or brew pub barley slag for their compost piles. Lou L. suggest that now is the time to spread lime on your dahlia plot if you need to raise the PH closer to 7. Now is the last chance to lay down a couple inches of chicken manure so it has 4-6 weeks to "cool down." Greg M. reports that in the one spot he dumped chicken gold last year, his dahlias grew noticeably lusher. Save tubers and make cuttings for your benevolent society's Tuber and Plant Sale. Weed Weed Weed!



Yours in Dirt,

Deborah

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

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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