

## **PLANNING**

- Planning the sale by committee didn't produce a camel, in part because the blueprint was already available for the plant sale. The amount of time and work done by the team of eight (especially by Connie) really showed through. I hope the chapter can retain a cleaned up / concise record of the procedure of the sale so that future events can refer to critical narratives and timeframes. Perhaps we can compile a Plant Sale handbook / checklist of sorts? (JD)

My suggested timeline dates (CdG):

- If we are going to operate by committee, the committee should be identified by May 1. Need to find an overall Plant Sale coordinator to oversee the committee's activities.
- First hard deadline will be: Order Placement by August 1
- Preorders: August 23 - September 18 (Wednesday after the September Chapter Meeting)
- Updated order to Nurseries by September 25, taking into account the preorder results
- All plant tagging should take place the Tuesday, October 8. Plant Sale will be October 12 with deliveries on October 11.
- We have purchased leftover plants from EDI in the past, and did it again this year. We need to make a conscious decision about whether or not we want to do this again (~\$1,000 in plants). Resulted in changes to some of our nursery orders and kept Torrey pretty busy inspecting leftover inventory. We'll want to communicate with them well in advance of the last couple of weeks before the sale about what we are willing to do.
- Advertising - If we want print ads (i.e. California Garden) - we will need to coordinate this in the May-June.

## **NURSERIES AND PLANTS**

- Moosa Creek delivered via tiered, rolling plant stands that reduced their off load time substantially. Su's investment there was well spent. The drawback is that it introduced a new refuse source of shipping plastic, taken by the driver to be disposed of. (JD)
- We need some changes in how to deal with Moosa Creek for labeling and order confirmation, as recommended by committee members who dealt with the hiccoughs there. (JD)
- Request that the nurseries pull our plants on the Monday before the sale and carefully check the order. I spoke with Alisa from TOL. She said that they did pull our order on Monday. But either they did not check carefully or they did not communicate with us that there were a number of plants that did not look good. So when our taggers arrived on Thursday, they found that a number of plants were not suitable. Moosa Creek also had some substantial plant issues which they didn't seem to know about ahead of time and which were discovered by our taggers on Wednesday. (BM)
- Most importantly, we should tag plants on Tuesday before the sale not Wednesday or Thursday. This will give us an opportunity to try to make up for any shortfalls from one of the other nurseries. (BM)
- If we do have the opportunity to acquire additional plants due to last minute issues, we don't need to have someone to have to drive back to the nurseries. We could ask the nurseries to segregate the unlabeled plants so that we can unload them to a specific area at Balboa and label them before they are taken to the floor. (BM)
- Nursery "buddies"-Might be worth considering appointing the Tagging lead people early so they can be in periodic communication with the nurseries regarding orders (one "buddy" per nursery). This isn't to say it would have made miscommunications easier this year, but may result in a little less work for the overall plant manager. (CdG)

## PRE-SALE PROMOTIONS

- I personally would have liked if all of the communications about the sale had included links to our seed inventory. In fact, I am totally willing to do pre-orders but somehow missed the boat on getting that out in the communications along with the plant pre-orders notices. (CZ)

## PHYSICAL LOGISTICS

- The hold area could be a little better advertised for its purpose. An issue came up with potential abuse of the system, allowing people to hold plants there until after the mark down on all plants at ~2 PM. We resolved this by having the tickets writers complete tickets for everything still in the hold area before that time and producing "after 2 PM" tickets that gave the mark down of 25% on all. This issue should be discussed to form a solid policy that works best for Torrey's time spent getting plants to move *and* applying a potentially conflicting policy late in the sale. (JD)
- We should have coordination with any other groups piggy backing our space before the sale.
- The amount of waste at the end of the sale was mostly the table cloths that got wet & dirty, tape, and regular refuse from the public. We might provide a recycling bin of our own since Balboa parks' bins are all co-mingled. Once bagged, it might get a CRV credit for the park or chapter or just be given away for proper disposal. (JD)
- The main complaints were again about the loading zone situation and getting checked for the tickets more than once. About tickets, as long as the receipts are visible, there's no reason to ask twice. Perhaps we can provide something like a CNPS business card or bookmark on a stick that is placed in a pot when the sale is completed? Many people place their receipts in their purse at the POS and are annoyed they have to dig it out again. We might ask they leave it visible until they get to their car / taxi? The loading zone situation was alleviated by Leon and Neal and a few others helping load plants and bring back carts. Not much we can do there without trading a lot of volunteer time. (JD)
- Carts are used on a trust system that could result in them being taken. There's no way to know if they are being taken to the parking lots and left there without sending out a volunteer. There was one brought back from the Uber / Lyft / Taxi stop all the way at the main plaza. Supermarket style solutions may be too expensive to implement. Ultimately, we have to look at whether it's just cheaper to replace them (~\$70 each) than try to track them down. [RFID locator tags can be explored](#), but have costs of purchase, maintenance, and time. Also, who will track the trackers? (JD)
- Better signage for the holding area would be good. I also realized too late that it would be good to talk to the people in line to explain how the ticket writing, plant holding, payment and car loading processes work. That could help prevent some of the confusion during the busiest period. (DR)
- The spaces that I taped out were too large and so there were not enough of them during the peak period. We had 34 spaces and we needed 10 more. Next year I will make more smaller spaces with just a few big ones for people with really big orders. (DR)
- My attempt to keep paid and unpaid plants separated didn't work perfectly but it did help. Once customers got their plants into the paid area I did not need to check their receipt again, (unless they went back and got more plants which did happen a few times). (DR)
- I really like the aprons. They were functional and visible. (DR)
- Storage - most everything is back in storage. All is pretty much tagged and identified and in good organizational order. Please be sure to keep the storage unit neat if you need to remove and replace items. Before the next sale, we may want to purchase an additional 2 wagons. We may also need to supplement signage to clarify plant sale instructions. (CdG)

## **SALE PROCESS**

- There was lots of confusion around the fact that people can add their seed (and other?) purchases to their ticket before they pay so you may add training to ticket writers to tell people that they can go do some more shopping before they check out. (CZ)
- They get stopped if they try to leave the main quad and come to the breezeway if they haven't paid for their plants. I guess that also means ticket writers should add "and go put your plants in the hold while you shop" (CZ)
- The people who did have tickets and were adding seeds sometimes had 2 tickets with a carbon copy and some didn't. Some had the total tallied at the bottom with the bottom part (where I add seed purchases) crossed out... just more examples of confusion with tickets. (CZ)
- Next year I should get trained to write up sales slips so I can help handle the early crush of ticket writing. Maybe Midge (don't know her last name) would want to do this also. She was tremendously helpful in the holding area. (DR)
- I like the idea of a sticker or some kind of marker to show that an order has been paid for. That way we wouldn't need to look at receipts, and it would help make the separation of paid and unpaid plants work much better. (DR)
- 10% off to members. Need to make sure that ticket writers look for the butterfly stamp on member's hand to verify active membership. I am not sure if this was communicated to all ticket writers to look for this. (CdG)
- 10% off applies only to Plants. There was some question by customers regarding this incentive.
- Money collection. It worked well to rent 2 wireless terminals for credit card purchases. Cut down on the lines and kept people happier. (CdG)

## **VOLUNTEERS**

- Volunteer coupons might be grouped with the hand out of the aprons/buttons at the Volunteer check in table. It was difficult to keep track of everyone the coupons had/hadn't been given to on the floor. I apologize to anyone who did not get one who should have. (JD)
- Volunteers could/should be allowed to pick out plants they want and have them in the Hold Area, but this should be limited to between 7 and 8 AM. The hour before the sale, we should not have anyone placing plants in carts unless under special exceptions. I don't see a problem with the public perusing the floor early, but must be cleared between 8:30 and 9:00 to give the people in line satisfaction for following directions. (JD)
- Sounds like you could have used more volunteers in the cart/car loading department. We communicated this need to our NCL volunteers, but it was too late (a week before the event) and most folks had made plans. We can better recruit NCL volunteers with more notice. There is another similar group too - National League of Young Men who can be asked as well. (CZ)
- Many volunteers took advantage of the 8-9 am hour to pick out plants for themselves and put them in the holding area, which worked fine for the most part. What I want to work on next year is a clearer way to mark their orders with their names and an indication that they are volunteers. One option would be for them to use their vol discount coupon with their name on it to mark their boxes. I think it might also be good to have a designated holding area for the volunteers' plants since they tend to stay there several hours. If we have the vol's plants all in one area, we can write full price tickets for all of them at 1 pm (along with all other plants in the holding area at that time). We did that this time but it would be more orderly if we had volunteer plants separated from other customers. (DR)

## **AT-SALE PROMOTIONS**

- Greg was an excellent addition on the microphone-he spurred a renewed interest in the sale after things had slowed and brought in additional people from the park to browse the floor. (JD)
- The Tecolote Nature Center table brought a lot of interest by kids and the public and had great fringe benefits by having Ranger Cameron present in uniform. (JD)
- The information/concierge booth was a great addition as well. (JD)
- The public might be more aware of any presentations like the talk given by Lee. A poster or flyer at the expert table and the main entry might help. (JD)
- A shift of the merchandise tables a little further north in the colonnade could really help Fred's table get more natural light. I'd hope the Robert's would get more interest in the merchandise that way. (JD)
- Sale hours signs were not put up on the south side or west side of the plaza, which led to some minor confusion with some customers before 9 AM. (JD)