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# florida daffodil society news

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## 2009 BULB SALE RESULTS

This year the Florida Daffodil Society (FDS) handled over 29,000 bulbs. Thanks to all the members who participated! Carol Allen and her daughters, Tracy and Diane, did the local sale. Baggers (a thankless job) were Ann Toefield, Charlotte Watkins, Margaret Fester, Lennie Kennedy, and Rachael Bradford. The Labor of Love Award goes to Jan Godfrey, who helped count hundreds of bulbs, and our ever patient treasurer, Pete Millett.

Since August, Linda Van Beck has given seven talks. The Garden Clubs that participated in our outreach programs included two in Georgia (Moultrie, Valdosta) and Florida Clubs in Live Oak, Orange Park, Blountstown, Inverness and the "Green Thumb Circle" in Sandestin. Master Gardeners in Jackson, Baker, Alachua and Marian County sold or individually purchased bulbs.

There were six sales, including a table at the 89th Annual Florida Bee Keeper Conference, and a number of preorder sales. Our accounting is not complete so we just hope we broke even. We gave approximately 990 bulbs for public planting which includes 100 Erlicheer to Orange Park Garden Club and 40 Paper Whites to North Florida Community College, the Green Institute, where we hope the society will be involved with bulb education.

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## BEERSHEBA ALERT

We have found a 50% loss of the Beersheba bulbs due to rot spreading into the main large bulb from the joint where the bulblet is attached or from the bulblet itself. Bulbs that checked out solid for two to three weeks later became soft. If you find bad bulbs or the bulbs did not come up, keep a record for a credit on next year's bulb order. Except for Beersheba, this year's bulbs were excellent. The Carltons looked great and most bulbs were above the minimum size.

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## WHAT MEMBERS ARE DOING

- Charlotte Watkins purchased 100 Nony for the Episcopal Church of the Advent yard bed in Tallahassee.
- Bobby Elliott, Melrose, FL, dispensed 75 Nony courtesy of FDS to public plantings at the Melrose Library, Lake Area Garden Club and the Episcopal Church.
- Susan Rothenberger is hosting a trial garden for FDS. She is located in O'Brien, FL, which is in a cold belt near the Suwannee River.
- Candace Hill, Deltona, Florida, loves bulbs and started growing Amaryllis. Last year she potted up Ziva and Ariel Paper Whites. Beginning last May, she has been keeping records on the highest, average, and lowest temperatures plus rainfall. Candace now has an FDS trial bed with a

compliment of very early bloomers. Hopefully she can collect the night temperatures during photosynthesis. The Tazettas will enjoy their baking. The highest high in May was 103.

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## BULB IDENTIFICATION

This season the FDS will test recently purchased historic daffodils to see if they are the same as the rescued bulbs in the Van Beck Garden. Small quantities of Soleil d'Or, Ceylon, Beersheba, bulbs from Atkins farm and a historic bulb mixture called Seasons Greeting which was purchased from Colorblends. We have two different sources of John's Old Fashion aka Stella to compare with our plantings and with each other. Some historic bulbs of Dutch stock lose their skinny twisted pedals and other irregularities. It is thought that over the decades "selections" in commercial bulbs has resulted in flower forms changing their willowy look to a more modern flower form. Thalia, Mrs. R.O. Backhouse and Dick Wellband are all examples of "fattened flowers" seen in some current catalogues.

The American Daffodil Society (ADS) aims to maintain the identification of daffodils through the judging of stems at ADS sanctioned flower shows. Unfortunately, historic daffodils haven't been high on the list. In 2002, the amount of space given to the historic section at the National Show was miniscule. That year, the FDS helped the move to encourage exhibition of historic bulbs by giving a bronze medal in John Van Beck's name to the best historic daffodil at the National Show. Mary Ann Van Kluenen hatched the idea and paid for the striking of the medal. Since then the number of ribbons awarded and general level of participation has increased in all ADS shows. Judging standards for historic daffodils were created, but modern looking cultivars continue to reap the most awards. Hopefully the current efforts of the ADS Historics Committee under the leadership of Sara Van Beck will be successful in educating judges. For the first time, a power point educational program on judging historic daffodils is being created. Not only is it important to judge historic bulbs by their own standards, it is also important to discredit daffodils that have been modernized. A new internet "listserve" or chat forum for Historic Daffodils has been started. If you want to join, email [svanbeck@profilingsolutions.com](mailto:svanbeck@profilingsolutions.com). The ADS does not have any official gardens, let alone gardens that preserve the historic daffodils that have been growing in America. The pendulum swings and more people are interested in daffodils that twist and move with the wind.

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## VAN BECK GARDEN

The Van Beck Garden is primarily a preserve for historic and species daffodils. This year the gardens will be open each weekend in January. Many tazettas are already up! A rule of thumb is usually four to six weeks to blooming time after the bulb breaks ground. A walking guide map will be offered so that one can walk most of the five acres without getting lost and the bloomers will be identified. There will be the odd chair and chairs set down at the lake. If you need directions, call 850-878-9753 or get internet instruction to: 6061 Weeping Willow Way, Tallahassee, Florida. Remember this is the path less traveled as you look for instructions.

Currently in bloom is Shelag, small Paper White, 3 kinds of Autumn Yellows, Autumn Pearl and Miss Lindsay. Shelag is an example of one daffodil out of clump of bulbs that has fortitude to bloom every year. It is a **very** tall Paper White that smells like a latrine which may account for its drop in popularity. This year we will test two more Israeli Paper Whites -- Nir and Ariel.

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## "GOLDEN DAYS"

Earlier this year, the President of the National Garden Clubs, Inc., declared her "Golden Days" project to promote and encourage the planting of yellow daffodils. All garden clubs under the NGC are encouraged to plant daffodils with location emphasis on community facilities such as nursing

homes, assisted living, and retirement centers where senior garden club members live. Public buildings and Blue Star Memorial sites are also listed as a priority for mass plantings. What started as a NGC fund raising project, with one cultivar and/or a commercial mixture from one supplier, has developed into a full scale project for all those who can grow daffodils without any restrictions as to type or source. If you can't grow daffodils, yellow day lilies and marigolds will be allowed. The idea of tying the phrase "Golden Days" and daffodils will bring joy to many people, not just senior garden club members. In Florida, the Federated Garden Clubs will finish developing a program this winter. The intent is to encourage the growing of daffodils in the ground, not in pots. The NGC is hoping to keep track of all this activity and is awarding certificates for various categories. All in all, the FDS thinks that "Golden Days" will be a great boost for daffodils.

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