

Katrina Hancock wins national honor

American Daffodil Society bestows Youth Achievement Award

By Lindsay Pykosz

lpkosz@inkym.com If you ask 11-year-old Katrina Hancock what her favorite daffodil is, she won't hesitate to tell you: Fly Half, with golden yellow petals and a deep red trumpet.

But the truth is, she enjoys them all, especially when they start blooming in the spring.

"I like the thrill of when they're coming up," Hancock said in her daffodil-filled yard last week. "It never gets old."

Earlier this month, Hancock was named recipient of the American Daffodil Society's Youth Achievement Award for her planning, planting and growing of her own daffodils.

An eight-member committee unanimously chose Hancock for the award, which was announced at the World Daffodil Convention, held in St. Louis, Mo.

To be considered for the award, open to current ADS youth members in grades five through 12, Hancock had to submit an essay explaining how her collection began, a statement that related to her personal enjoyment of growing daffodils and 10 photos from her collection. The photos had to include one example of an individual bloom and one example of a garden view with part of Hancock's collection.

Hancock, a fifth-grader at the Nantucket New School, received a free 10-year membership to the ADS as part of the award. Nial Watson of Ringhaddy Daffodils in Northern Ireland also gave Hancock a \$50 gift certificate for bulbs that she can plant this fall.

"I was going to sleep when I discovered that," Hancock said of when she learned she won the award. "I was drifting off. I was definitely excited, but could have been more ecstatic if I was more awake."

Lisa Kuduk, youth chairperson for the ADS, said Hancock is only the second young person to receive the award, which is not presented annually. The eight-member committee could find no faults in Hancock's submission, she said.

"The mere fact that she took the time, the mere fact that we found an 11-year-old who is active and involved in a plant society and is not dragged kicking and screaming is a big thing," she said.

Hancock showed in her first Nantucket Community Daffodil Flower **HANCOCK, PAGE 2A**

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– Katrina Hancock Daffodil-grower



FLOWER GIRL: Katrina Hancock gathers her daffodils for entry in this year’s Nantucket Garden Club 42nd annual Community Daffodil Flower Show.

Photo by Kris Kinsley Hancock



Katrina Hancock, 9, in 2014 with her entries and third-place ribbon at the Nantucket daffodil show.

Hancock: Hopes to enter mini collection this year

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Show, held annually over Daffodil Weekend, when she was just 5 years old. At the time, her mother Kris was a judge for the family-arrangement portion of the show.

“She brought in a photo and two different daffodils and she won something for every one,” Kris said.

Over the years, Hancock has worked with Nantucket Garden Club members, who have shared their knowledge with her.

Mary Malavase, a committee advisor for the 42nd annual daffodil show – set for this weekend at Bartlett's Ocean View Farm – said she has been encouraging Hancock, who happens to be her neighbor, to have fun with this passion.

“In all the years that I've been doing daffodils and helping Nantucket schoolchildren, I think Katrina is one that stands out as being consistently interested in wanting to learn every year,” Malavase said. “I've seen tremendous growth in her interest and love of the daffodil.”

The show has become less about the ribbons she wins and more about the overall experience, she said. And the reason she does it is because it's fun, she added.

“I want to see what happens. I like setting them up. It's not all about receiving awards,” Hancock said of her favorite parts of the daffodil show each year.

“I get to see what I have and see other hybrids and types. I take pictures of the ones I like and often times end up ordering them. We have quite a lot and not enough places to put them.”

Last year, Hancock submitted 27 flowers to the show, but she's not sure how many she will have this year. She was preserving some in the refrigerator last week. Early flowers can be held in water for 10 days in a refrigerator (not frost-free) at about 40 degrees. She has also had to force some daffodils to open by putting them in a warm room.

Looking to expand her submissions, Hancock this year will be entering miniature daffodils, something brand-new for her.

“I've been wanting to enter five flowers for the mini collection,” Hancock said. “I haven't had enough or they didn't bloom at the right time.”

And when it comes time for Hancock to pick the daffodils she will be entering, she said that part is easy.

“It just calls to me, almost,” she said.



Katrina Hancock prepares a daffodil-show entry in 2014.

Photo by Kris Kinsley Hancock
