

MTDS News

Middle Tennessee Daffodil Society

Established April 5, 1958



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

As you receive your fall newsletter, fall is around the corner in Middle Tennessee. A time when daffodil enthusiasts either eagerly anticipate planting their new bulbs in hopes for a wonderful spring, or bemoan the pain of planting what they overzealously ordered in the spring after seeing many beautiful blooms at a local show! Nonetheless, time will soon be of the essence. If you have planned your fall planting and realize that you still have some ideal garden room to spare, plan on picking a new variety or two of bulbs up at the MTDS fall membership meeting in October. Additionally, if you over-ordered or dug this summer and were pleasantly surprised by the multiplication of your cultivars, please bring your extra bulbs to swap – bagged and labeled to share with other MTDS members. Our fall meeting is planned for Sunday, October 12th, at 2:00 at my house. I hope to see you all there! Plan ahead and bring a list of the cultivars in your collection so you can make good decisions about what bulbs to take home from the swap...remember all current MTDS dues-paying members may participate, even if you have no bulbs to share!

I also encourage you to attend the ADS Fall Board Meeting's Miniature Symposium to be held on Saturday, November 1st at the Maxwell House Hotel. You can email Becky Fox Matthews, MTDS member and ADS 2nd Vice President at bfoxmatt@united.net for more information or you can click on the link on the ADS website at www.daffodilusa.org

Hope to see you on October 12th!

Ann McKinney
MTDS President

MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING

The spring meeting of the Middle Tennessee Daffodil Society was held at the home of Ann McKinney on Sunday, March 9th at 2:00pm.

Ann welcomed existing MTDS members and new members. She gave the specifics of the upcoming show and solicited help for set-up, clerks and tear-down.

Following Ann's few announcements, a design demonstration was conducted by Jennifer and Jeff Harvey. The Harveys demonstrated both Oriental and traditional design. The demonstration was very helpful to members who have never participated in design classes, as well as to members who have experience doing so. Jennifer also discussed the designs that they demonstrated in relation to the 2008 design schedule.

Ann thanked the Harveys for sharing their time and talents with the group.

Ann discussed that she was adding a photography section to the show this year for additional interest to visitors of the show. She discussed that the section would be for exhibition purposes only and would not be judged.

Ann discussed that MTDS will be celebrating its 50th anniversary on April 5, 2008 and planned a display to have at the show in April at Cheekwood.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned. Becky Fox Matthews invited all in attendance to drive to her house to tour her gardens. What a treat!

DUES:

For the sake of simplicity, Ann McKinney, MTDS Treasurer, would like to propose that the dues due date be set for a specific month. We will discuss this at the October meeting. She would like to propose November as our fall newsletter is generally sent in September and the fall meeting is in October. We will adjust prepaid membership accordingly. Ann will coordinate this effort with Anne Owen, Membership Chairman.

MTDS OFFICERS:

President: Ann McKinney
Vice President: Susan Basham
Membership Chairman: Anne Owen
Treasurer: Ann McKinney

ADS OFFICERS:

Ann McKinney - Southeast Regional Director
Dick Frank – ADS Counsel
Becky Fox Matthews – 2nd Vice President
Bonnie Campbell – Southeast Regional Vice President

LOCAL ACCREDITED JUDGES:

Becky Fox Matthews
Sandra Frank
Dick Frank
Ann McKinney
Amanda McKinney
Nancy Keen Palmer
Patrice Winters

PROVEN PLANTING ADVISE:

Advice for preparation, planting and labeling as written by Kathy Welsh in the WDS Fall 2006 newsletter: The article includes commentary that was a result of interviews that Kathy conducted with Mary Koonce, Clay Higgins, and Bob Huesmann, three very successful exhibitors in the Washington area (although Clay has since moved to North Carolina), along with Kathy's techniques. Kathy suggests in the article to absorb the advice of all four growers and modify them to meet your own needs.

If you have any specific questions, please feel free to email Kathy Welsh at kathywelsh01@aol.com. She is the current 1st Vice President of ADS.

Fall is the time for planting, but before you plant, you need to have your soil prepared and your bulbs sorted.

How do I prepare the soil? Mary has a very large commercial size rototiller which she uses to loosen the soil. She adds some peat moss to break up the clay and improve its composition. Clay prepares his soil at least one month in advance of planting. He amends the soil with peat and "garden chalk", a product that improves the electrolytes in the soil as well as the drainage. Clay has also imported good topsoil so that some of his beds are raised 6" above the normal level. Once prepared, Clay soaks the soil so that it settles back into place. He refreshes his soil every time he digs. Kathy digs her ground approximately 10" deep using a shovel, then uses a Mantis tiller to break up the dirt. She adds bags of "Super Fines" rototilling these in, breaking up the clay and improving drainage. Super Fines is a bark mulch that has been shredded four times. Its composition is very light and fluffy. Claybusters is a similar product. This process is repeated several times and results in beds that are raised approximately 6" above the normal ground level. When do you begin planting? Mary, Clay and Kathy all agreed that the soil should be 55 degrees or below before planting begins. To modify this for Middle Tennessee, this is no earlier than the middle of October. All of the growers in the article have the goal of having

all of their bulbs in the ground by Thanksgiving (although most would admit that later planting has occurred on many occasions). It is important to get miniatures in the ground first when planting late. All bulbs need to grow roots before the ground freezes and this is even more important for tiny bulbs which are planted closer to the surface. Bulbs cannot survive out of ground for an entire year. If nothing else, pot them. Early spring planting is possible if the bulbs are still firm. Soft bulbs should be thrown away.

Do you plant your bulbs in any particular order? All three exhibitors agreed that getting bulbs ready for planting is far more time-consuming than getting them in the ground. It is important to have your labels made and a planting order determined before you head out to the beds. Kathy plants her bulbs in alpha order by division. This makes it easier to find a particular variety at show time. She also makes sure that bulbs planted next to one another do not have similar color codes. This helps with identification when there is a mix-up. Mary does the same. This practice was learned from Delia Bankhead. Clay learned his planting method from Marie Bozievich. He plants in alpha order only for everything going in the ground during a given year. Clay feels that intermixing divisions reduces the risk of problems. Bob Huesman doesn't plant in any particular order. He plants bulbs in the locations he thinks they will do the best. Like Clay, he feels that mixing the divisions helps with potential disease problems. Bob makes sure similar color codes are not next to one another. Kathy has observed that division 6's prefer some summer shade and tolerate or even like some summer moisture.

How many bulbs do you plant of a particular variety?

Most of these exhibitors only purchase one bulb of a given variety. A few are willing to spend extra for something that has a really good track record. Once established, their methods are similar. More are planted back of varieties that have performed well, both in quantity and the number of locations. Really outstanding cultivars are often placed in two or three different places in the yard to vary blooming

times. Kathy and Mary plant back 4-10 with 6 of an average cultivar. Clay typically plants back 7 and places them on a grid. Bob usually plants back 2 per hole, but plants multiple holes of the things her really likes. Much of this decision is dictated by available land.

How do you plant? Mary plants 7-8" deep. She uses an auger and plants one bulb per hole. Minis are planted 4-5" deep in berry baskets. Bulbs are rolled in Banvel prior to planting, a dust to prevent basal rot. 5-10-10 fertilizer is broadcast over the beds after planting and watering is left to nature. Bob plants at a similar depth. He uses Captan, Bonide's Bulb Dust, or another general purpose fungicide powder which prevents fusarium to coat his bulbs. Again this is extra protection against basal rot. Fertilizer is placed in the bottom of the hole, followed by dirt, sand, then the bulb. Bob usually waters unless it is a wet fall. He believes that consistent and ample water is one of the keys to great blooms. Kathy digs 8 or more inches deep, places 5-10-10 fertilizer in the hole or trench, then dirt, then small or medium Gran-i-Grit – to help with drainage and adds to the ease of finding bulbs when digging. It places the nutrients at the roots, where the bulbs are to absorb them. Don't let the fertilizer touch the bulbs or it will burn them. Kathy hasn't been using bulb dust. When it comes to miniatures, Kathy uses fertilizer very sparingly and usually broadcasts it over the planted area rather than with the bulb. Kathy waters in the fall when it is dry. Clay broadcasts fertilizer after planting. He has started using soaker hoses after planting as well.

Do you mulch? Everyone answered yes to this. Clay uses pine bark mulch because hardwood compacts too much. Kathy uses hardwood. Mary often uses hardwood, but pine needles when she can get them. Bob uses chopped leaves as mulch and suggests never using hardwood because it robs the soil of nitrogen. All four growers agreed that the use of mulch was essential to keep flowers clean and free of dirt during flowering.

Do you isolate new bulbs? All growers agreed that separating new bulbs until you know that they are free of pests and disease is the optimum solution. Some lift their bulbs after the first year to make sure they look good. Kathy often hot water treats new bulbs, depending on the source. Mary, Clay and Kathy have all experimented with hot water treatment which is used to kill bulb flies and nematodes. The temperature and length of treatment varies for these two problems.

How do you label your bulbs? All four growers label and map their bulbs. In addition to labeling and mapping, Kathy buries a piece of plastic milk carton with the name of the bulb and the color code written with a Sharpie pen. This provides verification when digging and can be kept in the mesh bag after bulbs are out of the ground. Bob uses plastic sticks and a sharpie and admits that heaving can be a problem. Mary uses 15" markers with a label made with a P-Touch labeler and has found that the labels will last for five years. Clay and Kathy Both use 12" EON markers. Clay uses the plates that come with the markers and a lead pencil. This holds up for about two years. Kathy makes an aluminum label with a Dymo labelmaker. The aluminum labels usually last 8 – 10 years. All four feel that a label AND a map are essential to keep track of their daffodils. Most make the map immediately and several keep track of how many bulbs they've planted.

MTDS FALL MEETING: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12TH 2:00PM
AT ANN MCKINNEY'S

Ann McKinney
5134 Remington Drive
Brentwood, TN 37027
ateamtn@aol.com
377-6848

Directions: Take I-65 South to Concord Road exit 71 Go right off the exit. Take a right at Franklin Road. Take a left at Murray Lane.

Take first left into Princeton Hills. Take first left onto Remington Drive. 5134 is the last house on the left on Remington.

It would be helpful if you email or call me to let me know if you are coming to the meeting and if you are bringing bulbs to share.Ann

FALL MEETING AGENDA:

- Ø Cheekwood Changes
- Ø Dues Changes
- Ø Program: Judging Daffs 101
- Ø Bulb Swap