

Pick your new daffodil at show

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Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
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MAR 30, 2018

7:00 AM

Know daffodils? You'll still learn something at the annual Daffodil Show on April 28 at Shady Side Academy in Fox Chapel. They'll have hundreds of plants in more than 60 varieties, some for sale.

"At their first show everybody says, 'I never knew there were so many different kinds and colors,'" said Bonnie Plato, a daffodil vice president with her husband Stephen in the Daffodil & Hosta Society of Western Pennsylvania.

For the sixth year, the society will hold its annual show and sale as part of the Garden & Landscape Symposium of Western Pennsylvania, which features speakers from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. April 28 at Shady Side Academy Senior School, 433 Fox Chapel Road, 15238.

At the same time, vendors will be selling unique plants and garden items in the Garden Marketplace. It's free and open to the public, as is the Daffodil Show and Sale. From 8-10 a.m., national judges will examine hundreds of blooms and award ribbons and prizes to novices and experts. From 10:30 a.m.-3 p.m., you can buy potted daffodils and hostas. Prices range from \$6-\$20 and colors from the classic yellow to pink, white, orange and various combinations. Here are three to look for:

'Popeye': a fragrant double introduced in 2008 with white petals and a yellow cup.



‘Canyon Wren’: a fragrant yellow with 3-5 florets on each stem and an orange cup.



‘Alexis Beauty’: a 2014 introduction with yellow petals and a big white cup edged with yellow.



For at least 20 years, the Platos have been adding daffodils to their Cranberry garden. “They’re one of many flowers that we really enjoy,” he said.

The two master gardeners now have more than 100 varieties mixed in among the hellebores, snowdrops, miniature irises and other early bloomers. They say the daffodils will start soon and probably peak in mid-April.

Unless a cold snap delays them, most will be done blooming by the time the show is held. That’s why the Platos and other experts use refrigerators to extend the flowers. First-time exhibitors can learn other show tips at a Daffodil Grooming Clinic at 1 p.m. April 14 at St. John’s Lutheran Church, 311 Cumberland Road, McCandless (15237). Then bring cut flowers to Shadyside Academy from 4-10 p.m. April 27 or 6-7:45 a.m. Aug. 28. Society members and other experts will be on hand to help.

The Platos also have planting tips for potted daffs bought at the show. Enjoy them indoors and keep them well watered, Mrs. Plato said. When the flowers are done, plant the clump outdoors and keep watering. Amending clay soil with compost and top dressing with a low-nitrogen fertilizer in the fall will help next spring.

“They’ll make a nice show the first year and every year it gets better,” she said.

The Daylily & Hosta Society of Western Pennsylvania will hold its annual Hosta Show on June 2 at Soergel Orchards, 2573 Brandt School Road, Wexford.

Information: www.dhswp.com.

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