



florida daffodil society news

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Y'ALL COME!

March 1 and 2: Saturday & Sunday

It's that time of year! The Annual Flower Show will be in the greenhouse at Tallahassee Nurseries, during operating hours. We will man an information table from 10 AM to 5 PM both Saturday and Sunday. There will be a talk on dafs at 11 AM Saturday. Hope we will have better weather than last year! All daffodils are welcome, especially as we give so many away. Drop by and see how pretty our garden show looks.

March 8, 2:30-3:30

We will dedicate the John Van Beck Memorial Garden in McCord Park on Saturday, March 8, rain or shine. Gene Ellis and Donna Legare will talk about John, gardening and the importance of public plantings. Over the years, both Gene (past owner of Tallahassee Nurseries) and Donna (Native Nurseries) worked with John. Both nurseries, as well as Richbourg Nurseries, contributed plants to John's Garden.

At 3 PM Brenda Pratt (Tallahassee Parks) will welcome us. Clara Jane Smith, charter FDS member and the designer of the garden, will unveil the plaque.

The Park Service has erected a fence that prevents cars from driving through the park. 2 cars will be used to ferry those who cannot walk the distance from Armistead Road to the garden. All others can park in the "pull in" spaces on Armistead.

While written invitations will be sent to those who contributed to the garden fund, this newsletter notice is a general invitation for all to join in the celebration of John's life and passion for daffodils. We hope you'll come!

March 7 -8: Friday & Saturday, 9 to 5 ***Camden Daffodil Festival and Garden Tours***

Special tour packages at \$18.00 and \$24.00 include homes, log cabin village and gardens. Contacts include Chamber of Commerce (870-836-

6426), P.O. Box 99, Camden, Arkansas 71711, or www.camdenfestival.com.

Unfortunately, Cecilia Jones' gardens will not be op[en this year.

IN THE FEBRUARY GARDEN

Oh, what a time we are having! All the daffodils are on a schedule, it's just one of their own choosing. Some of the grandifloras that slept through Christmas are now blooming on very short stems. Lenny Kennedy called last week to say her Abba (4y-o) was blooming and, sure enough, there was one blooming up the hill.

John referred to the "parade of daffodils" as a parade is both ongoing and is also a series of floats or events. As such, we refer to blooms through January as "very early" and the first February blooms as "early". Single blooms of the early season are popping open: Sweetness (7y-y), Erlicheer (4w-w), Cragford (8y-o) (Abba's single form), Grand Primo (8w-y), and February Gold (6y-y). Carlton (2y-y), Early Jonquilla (13y-y), Ceylon (2y-o), Campernelle (13y-y), and Orange Queen (7y-y) are also popping here and there. One Carlton has 8 petals! A daffodil that is a pleasant surprise is Rejnveld's Early Sensation (1y-y). Noticed and bought by Jack Van Keunen many year ago, the bulb produces a sturdy large cup yellow daffodil.

MEMBERSHIP

Mary Maude Sharpe, our Membership Chairman, is a flower society expert. She has served as President of the Camellia Society and the Tallahassee Garden Club, and currently is treasurer of the Tallahassee Area Rose Society. She keeps -- or has kept -- those organizations in shape as far as membership and money is concerned. According to the FDS bylaws, dues are due in

May. This has not been a time-honored tradition. People started paying dues when they participated in the bulb sales, as paid dues is the only requirement to participate and it was an easy way to do two things at the same time. First a warning shot was fired with the 2002 bulb sale newsletter. Few people responded so we said adios to those who did not. This fall some long-time but delinquent members and complementary members were sent a Mary Maude designed letter and there was a 50% positive response. We plan to follow Mary Maude's suggestion and increase our complimentary list to include the *Tallahassee Democrat* garden editors and regional agricultural extension offices. Using our e-mail editor, Linda Williams, cost is not a factor. The board agreed to an official dues due letter to be sent with the newsletter nearest May. Total membership at this point is 170 with 29 receiving the e-mailed newsletter.

As you know, the number on the mailing label refers to the year for which dues were paid. FDS is by far the "cheapest" daffodil society and ranked second in membership after the American Daffodil Society (1000+).

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

FDS help is needed at Goodwood in the form of weeders and transplanting helpers. The Goodwood volunteers are stretched thin. We need to transplant daffodils, planted by the FDS, to the resource beds and start the development and maintenance of the demonstration bed. If you have an hour or more, call Linda Van Beck (878-9753) and a time schedule to your liking will be arranged.

HAVING A GREAT TIME

Your president has been out and about. An invitation was received from the Bay County Master Gardeners' program to visit and lecture in Panama City in January. There are two FDS members in Panama City. The big need is available bulbs, so hope we can set up a joint Garden Club/Master Gardener bulb sale.

In January, a new tazetta was found at the Bradford-Cobb House. Owner Lee Meadows has joined the FDS and we will help him relocate the crowded Paper Whites and *N. Italicus* that front Calhoun Street.

February started off with a talk to the Madison Garden Club. The highlight of this trip was a visit to Yvonne Smith's daffodil garden. This bulb garden has not been added to since the 40's. There was a

small Nat Williams (first found in Florida) and a petite unknown tazetta. The design of the garden is still intact.

Coming up are talks to local garden circles and, in March, a comprehensive lecture to the Leon County Master Gardeners. At the end of March, it's off to the American Daffodil Society annual convention in Ashville, NC, where Linda Van Beck will participate on a panel discussing public plantings of daffodils.

GOLDEN PERFECTION

Many of the daffodils that do well for us were hybridized in the 20's. Some of these robust, disease resistant cultivars have been replaced by "improved" models. Golden Perfection (7y-y) is a case in point. This daffodil has 2 to 3 saturated small yellow blooms to a stem. The good news is that a source has been found on the internet — New Zealand. We could purchase, wholesale, a minimum order of 1,000 bulbs for \$165 plus \$160 shipping and \$175 for USDA requirement. Throw in postage and guess work and that total comes to approximately 54¢ a bulb at the current rate of exchange. The bulbs would take a year and a half to acclimate. It's something to think about as a number of bulbs the FDS recommends will not be available for the next bulb sale.

Keep Watering: a steady supply of water means better blooms!

We want to know how your bulbs are doing!!! Let us know — call Phyllis Graham at 222-7373.

Twister!

Complete article by Adam Summers on why daffodils turn in the wind is at http://biomechanics.bio.uci.edu/_html/nh_biomech/daff/daff.htm

Consider a field of daffodils: A carpet of gaudy yellow flowers dancing in the breeze, revealing in their movements the direction of each puff of wind. The contrast between the sunny petals and the vibrant green of the stems; the joyous waggle of each flower. This is the stuff of poetry and art.

Given to Linda for Future Speech PARKS AND SUCH

Last year the *Tallahassee Democrat* published its annual edition titled *Living Here*, but there was hardly a mention of public or private gardens, although there was mention of public parks. At the FDS board meeting, it occurred to me how many pleasurable hours our family had spent in the parks, ravines, woods and LeMoyne's public garden. John also spent many, many hours at Goodwood Plantation providing and planting daffodils and other plants, and enjoying the company of gardeners. John was happiest when puttering in his garden.

One of John's best days was when FDS member Audrey Hayes called to say she had "cracked the code." The FDS had unsuccessfully tried to plant daffodils in the Park Avenue Chain of Parks facing Gadsden Street. Audrey was not to be deterred and with Mike Cooper's help and blessing, daffodils were first planted at the Dorothy B. Oven Park. A memorial plaque remembering Audrey and her love of daffodils was later placed in the Oven Park by the FDS.

Like a lot of people who didn't live in Tallahassee prior to 1965, I thought that McCord Park was named after Betty McCord, who started Springtime Tallahassee. Her idea of having a main event when the Legislature was in session and the beauty of Tallahassee was at its peak is still vibrant today. Unfortunately, the harbingers of northern spring -- the robin and daffodil -- are long gone when April rolls around. Actually the park is named after her father-in-law, a prominent Tallahassee leader and Mayor. However, I think Betty would have been very pleased to have drifts of daffodils in Tallahassee.

There is a long tradition of the Tallahassee Parks Department serving the flower needs of the community. Today, non-profit organizations can still receive free roses for the asking. Maybe someday there will be so many daffodils that they could be added to the list.