

The Indiana Ledger

A Publication of the Indiana Daffodil Society
Sara Kinne, President Vol. XIV No. 1 April 2007 Suzy Wert, Editor

Dear Daffodilians,

Friends assure me that spring is coming and the singing birds do echo that reassurance. This has been a difficult winter for me. My mother died in January and my thoughts are of her these days, and one nugget that she shared with me a few years ago is that a daffodil bloomed on the day I was born in March. That was before global warming, and so was remarkable for the northernmost part of this state.

My mentor, Libby Frey, has given me a selection of nine different bulbs to plant in honor of my mother. Because the ground was frozen and snow covered, I have started them in pots. Now if only the resident raccoon will leave my experiments alone, I might have glorious results. No matter what, I'll snug these treasures into a flower bed later this spring where they can get some rest and do their magic next year.

I have dreamed of attending the Amity, Oregon daffodil show for years and will do so March 24. A friend from Bloomington who now lives on the Oregon coast has invited me to come see this community effort first-hand and has offered an opportunity to visit Elise Havens and see the Mitsch daffodil fields. The idea of a relaxing visit during this period of grief is just what I need and I look forward to sharing it with you at our March 31 meeting.

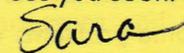
The focus of IDS at the moment is on our upcoming show. This is Kay Cunningham's fifth and final year to chair the show and I want to offer a huge thank you to Kay for taking this monumental responsibility. I would love to have someone come forward and receive the show baton from Kay. To work alongside her at our show in April would provide a hands-on learning experience and would be excellent preparation for our 2008 show.

That said, my next request is easy. I need you to step up to the plate and volunteer to clerk at our show. We need six people, minimum. Requirements include discretion, attention to detail, and a willingness to serve. Please help. The specifics for making our show a success will be discussed at our March 31 meeting. Show setup/breakdown volunteers are needed, and a plan for the judges' luncheon will be formulated at this meeting.

In October, I spoke briefly about IDS goals for 2007. I have mulled this over and suggest that we start in our own back yard and tend the daffodils at Holliday Park, planted years ago by Suzy Wert, Joe Hamm and others. These bulbs have thrived, multiplied, and are ready for division. Clumps near the nature center are especially thick, and I will be doing the first steps of marking the borders of the clumps after our upcoming meeting. I invite you to join me and I'll show you my fool-proof method for tagging a clump that will be dug later. It won't take long.

Remember, our partnership agreement with Holliday Park rewards us if our programs are open to the public so we will start promptly at IPM with our program. Interested attendees will be invited to stay for refreshments and the rest of the meeting.

See you soon.



Sara Kinne, President

Daffodils from Your Garden to the Show

~by Donna Dietsch, former Midwest Regional VP (Reprinted from IDS Ledger, March 2002)

When picking flowers, you will want to have a container with water in it to take out to the garden. Use lukewarm water since it is more easily absorbed by the flowers. I have some small plastic wastebaskets that I got at a dollar store. They are just the right size. Also you need a pen to write the name of the flower on the stem. If you need to do it, you can also write the color code on the stem. Write it near the bottom of the stem but not so low that you may cut it off when you adjust the heights for an entry. You have to have been out in the garden for a few days before the day you want to pick for the show since you need to have an idea of what will be ready to pick. You want to pick the bloom at its peak. If you have a refrigerator or a cold



basement to store them for a few days, then you will go out each day and pick those that are ready. Have an idea about which classes you would like to enter. If you want to do a Green Ribbon, you need four divisions, so you will need to plan to pick some that fit in. First, look at the flower closely to reject those that have obvious flaws, especially tears and cuts. Check the back of the flower to see if all petals are evenly spaced. Be sure that there is no green on the back and the spathe is intact. Check the stem for discolorations and reject those with a lot of twisting which is hard to correct. Look at the cup for tears and uneven edges. Some problems with the edges can be corrected, but if you have enough

flowers, just get the best ones. Look at the color. Has the reverse actually reversed? Is the cup that is color coded "R" really red all the way to the bottom? Count the petals on multiple headed flowers to be sure they all have six.

The most important part of the judging, and the one that has the most points, is condition. This refers to tears, cuts and nicks, and the age of the flower. Too young is as bad as too old. Let the bloom develop on the plant until it is at its peak. If you have many insects in your garden, they can remove pollen from the flower, so look for pollen dropped in the cup. The judges will.

When you decide that you want to pick one, remember that virus is spread by using the same instrument to cut all your flowers. I have two ways that I ensure that I am not spreading virus to another flower. I get a box of single edged razor blades at the hardware store. They come in a box of 100 for less than \$6. I use each blade twice, making a cut on one side then the other. Then I put the blade in alcohol. Or I have used my fingernail to make a cut in the stem and then bend the stem over to break it off. I can pick ten blooms before I wash my hands. Since I do have a fridge, I pick for several days before a show, so I seldom pick more than ten per day. There are viruses that are not readily apparent in one cultivar, but will show up in another.

I don't want to take any chances. Cut the stem as long as you can. You can shorten it later.

Immediately, when you pick the bloom, write the name on the stem and put it into the water. Many people hold the flower, bloom down to keep the sap from running out. When I have finished picking, I take the container into the house and change the water. I still use lukewarm and let them sit for about an hour. Then I change the water to cold and sit down to double check the blooms and do some grooming on them before I refrigerate them. It is easiest to do it then before they stiffen. If you leave it to the night before the show, you may not get much sleep, and you can get sloppy. It's when

you're tired that you put your fingernail through the petal of the one that would have been Best in Show. I've done that.

When you check over your blooms, look for the same things you looked for when picking them. There will always be a flaw that you missed. Putting them in warm water and having them in the house for an hour before touching them, gives the flowers a chance to soften up and makes it easier to manipulate them. Then you put them in the refrigerator to keep cool. Cold flowers are impossible to groom. The reason why I change the water to cold after they have been in the house for a while, is that the cold water will keep them from developing further. You did pick them at their peak of perfection.

After you have let your flowers sit inside for a hour or so, you will go through each of them. Look for faults that you overlooked outside. There will be some.

First check the petals. Turn the flower to the back and make sure all petals are at right angles to the opposite ones. Reject any that have a petal not in place. Look at the spathe and make sure it is whole and not badly torn.

Look for mitten thumbs and large tears and splits on the edges. Remove any little "things" that may be inside the spathe. They are leaf parts. These are usually on multiple flowered blooms. Use cuticle scissors because they are small and sharp.

Check the front of the flower. Look for mittens again. Look at the place where the petal is attached to the cup. Sometimes it is attached

“An exhibitor has to know some of the things the judges will consider in order to know which bloom to pick from his or her garden.”

~Donna Dietsch

too far up on the cup which will make the inside of the cup bulge inward. You can try to correct this by inserting a Q-Tip inside the cup and holding the cup in two fingers, press the Q-Tip outward, squeezing the cup a little to the outside, and sometimes it will go back into place. Use a squeeze, press, squeeze, press to try this. Or you can put the Q-Tip inside and press the cup around it to round it up. If it doesn't work, there is nothing you can do.

Make sure there are no tears on the rim of the cup, and that the ruffles are even or nearly even. If the ruffles are not even, you can fix this a little. Make sure your fingers are warm. Place your index finger in the cup and your thumb on the outside, right at the ruffle. Slowly work your fingers along the cup, flattening out the ruffle as you go. Very carefully!! You can tear the edge if you don't do it slowly. You may find it easier to put your thumb inside and your finger outside. I use my finger inside for jonquil and triandrus types and my thumb inside for larger flowers. I use my pinkie for minis. Yes you can

groom those, too. As you grasp the edge, twist your hand slightly to the outside forming the ruffles to the outside of the cup. Check to make sure the ruffles are even around the cup. Sometimes they go further out at the bottom of the cup. You can use the same method to put them closer in.

Sometimes the cup is square or lopsided and not round as it should be. Put your finger inside the cup, all the way down or as far as you can and gently press your fingers together to re-form the cup. You use a light pressure for this and the heat from your finger is enough to press the tissue of the flower to make it go the way you want it to go. I would suggest that as soon as you find a pot of daffodils in the grocery store, you get some to try these techniques out. It's easier than waiting until you have that blue ribbon one to try to groom.

You should know by now how to press the petals back to make them flat. I use a Q-Tip for this if I think I might tear the petals with my fingers. Otherwise, just push them back.

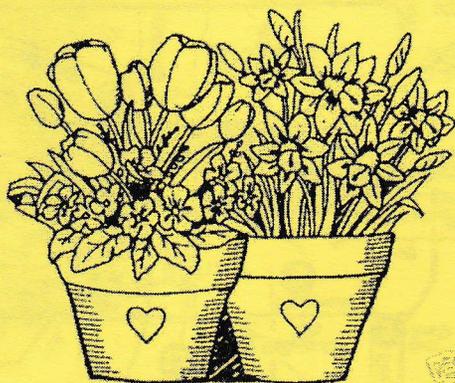
Here's a tricky little trick. When you have folds in the petals, or the edges are not flat, there are some things you can do. Make sure your fingers are warm, again. Carefully press the petals between your fingers. The pressure is just enough to flatten the folds, but not enough to bruise the petal. Hold the pressure for a short time and do it again if the petals are not flat. You can flatten the edges of the petals the same way, but do it very carefully. If you press too hard or too fast, you will tear the edge of the petal. You can make the petal have less of an incurve as long as you don't go all the way up to the center at the mucro. This takes some practice, and that's why you should get a pot of daffs to practice on or use one of the early ones in your garden. I have had a clump of Jetfire for a long time and I used it to practice on. This technique will also work to smooth petals that are ridged or the texture is a bit

bumpy. It will not eliminate these problems, but you can get a flower looking better and into the show when you need a particular one. This pressing of the petals is something that very few people do, mostly because they think it will not work or they are afraid that they will bruise the petals. If I am going to smooth a ridge, I start at the bottom of the petal and work upward. For uneven edges, I go the same way. If your fingers are up too far on the petals you can tear the edges. You do have to practice this, but when I showed the people in Pittsburgh, they could do it right away.



When the petals curl forward too much, you can get them to go backward. This can be used for cyclamineous that don't want to recurve properly. Place your index finger and thumb across the petal, thumb in the front. With your thumb, curl the petal over your finger. Do this slowly and move upward a little at a time until you get nearly to the top. The petal will recurve backward the way it is supposed to do. This will also take a bit of the incurve out of a petal.

his smoothing with the fingers is the best technique I have found. Almost no one does it. That's what gives you an advantage over others. They can grow them as well as you do, but if they can't groom as well, your flowers will look better. I once won Best in Show with a flower that had a slightly bumpy texture. I won because the other flower had a cup that was square. The other person could have adjusted the cup, but didn't know how or didn't want to try to fix it. In judging, form has more points to it than texture. Condition is the quality that the exhibitor has the most control over in terms of judging points, so that is why you want your flowers in the best possible condition.



2007 Calendar

Saturday, March 31, 2007 1:00 sharp! Holliday Park Nature Center. Program: See the newest styles of daffodils, choose daffodils from a catalogue, and learn how to extend your blooming season. We'll also talk about how judges judge and grooming flowers for the show

Saturday, April 7, 2007. Leota Barn Show. For more information, email Joe Hamm joehamm1@juno.com or call Helen Trueblood.

IDS Indiana State Daffodil Show Holliday Park, Indianapolis

Set up: April 11, 2007 1:00

Clinic for Exhibitors: April 11, 2007 @ 5:00

Show: April 12-13, 2007

Public Program: "Good, Better, Best"
April 12, 2007 @ 3:00.

Tear Down: April 13, 2007

Sunday, July 22 & Sunday, Aug 26 - Bulb Sales - Holliday Park 11:00 am open to the public. Set up and early member sales: 9:00

Saturday, August 25 Regular Meeting Program & Bulb & Plant Exchange. 1:00 (sharp!)-4:00 Holliday Park Nature Center

Saturday, October 6 - Regular Meeting & Bulb & Plant Exchange. 1:00 Holliday Park Nature Center

2007 Daffodil Show

April 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 <i>Set up 1:00-3:00</i>	12 <i>Show!</i>	13 <i>Tear Down 1:00</i>	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Members are needed for the following activities:

Wednesday, April 11 - Set up 1:00-3:00

Thursday, April 12 - Morning protein snacks for exhibitors & judges; Clerking 10:00-12:00

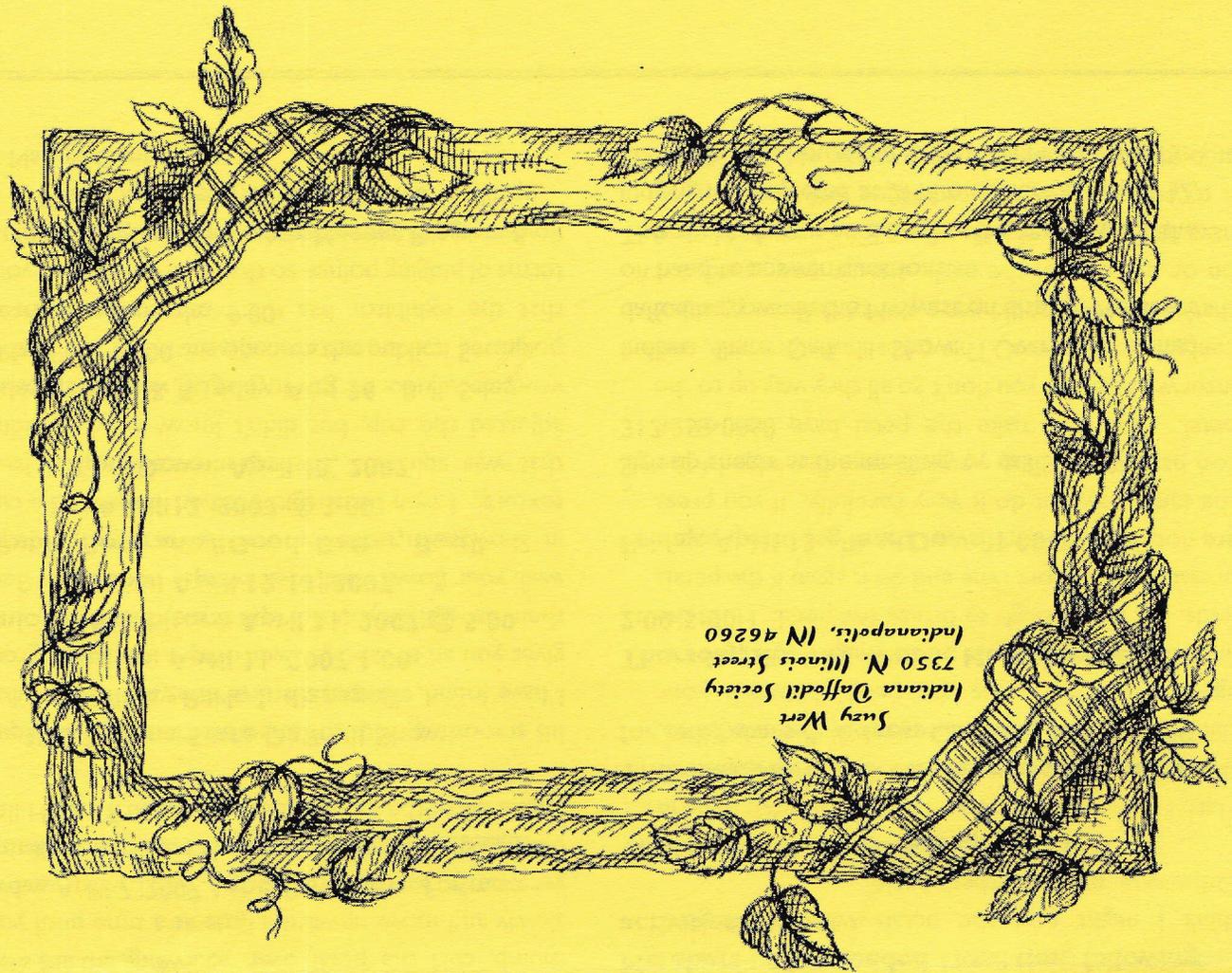
Thursday, April 12 - Public Hosts & Hostesses 2:00-5:00

Friday, April 13 - Tear Down 1:00-3:00

Sign up sheets at the meeting, or call Suzy Wert 317-259-0060.

Indiana State Daffodil Show: Over 500 named daffodils grown in the Midwest on display. Members on hand to answer questions.

The show does not open to the public until the judging is completed at 2PM on Thursday, April 12, 2007. Friday's hours are 9AM to 1PM on April 13.



Inside:

2007 Calendar

Daffodil Show Information

Getting flowers ready for Show

Next Meeting: Saturday, March 31 at 1:00

Nora Branch Library -16 on map

8625 Guilford Avenue

Indianapolis, IN 46240

317-275-4470