



florida daffodil society news

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THE BULB SALE COMETH

The 2009 FDS Bulb Sale pre-order form, etc., will be mailed out in early May. One of the new offerings will be Beersheba 1W-W. Beersheba is famous. The history of British hybridizing is incomplete without mentioning the Rev. G. H. Englehart, who got modern daffodils off to a great start. In 1923, he registered Beersheba. By 1951, Michael Jefferson-Brown wrote "It is now cheap and plentiful ... should be tried in every garden." Along the Gulf Coast, especially in Mississippi, this ivory white gentle trumpet was already ensconced. In the Van Beck Tallahassee garden, Beersheba appeared nearly ten years ago next to a path. It seems there has been a bloom every year and some years a bloom has survived in Mary Maude's flower refrigerator and been displayed at the FDS Flower Show. Last year there were two stems (flowers) and this year three stems. Jefferson-Brown passed on this bit of trivia: "When the Germans overran Holland in World War II, they started to prepare a catalog of Dutch bulbs to be sold in America. They devoted one whole page to Beersheba." Scott Kuntz says it all: "An immaculate classic daffodil with its long slender trumpet, lovely ivory white color, early blooming, free flowering and quick to increase." Coming from Holland, the bulb will need time to shrink and reset its clock for North Florida. Be prepared for a treat!

For North and Central Florida growers, we plan a variety of Paperwhites, including one from Bill the Bulb Baron out there in California.

FERTILIZER

What may not be offered at the Bulb Sale is bulb fertilizer. Back in the mid-90's when John Van Beck noticed a fertilizer recipe in John Trask's files, he recognized a "jump start" formula used by corn farmers in his native state of Illinois. The Trasks were farming three acres of daffodils – primarily Flower Carpet – on the sandy islands off Beaufort, South Carolina. John realized this recipe was better for sandy soils than anything he had tried. He finally found Wakeenah Feed and Seed, who

would mill and bag 6-24-24 with trace minerals and no sulphur by the half ton. The Van Becks purchased fertilizer every 2 years, rebagged and made some available to FDS members. This year there is just enough fertilizer left over to do the Van Beck garden next spring. Also, the cost of a single bag has more than doubled. It's time to look at another method of fertilizing daffodils.

Keith Kriedler of ADS/Texas fame, grows acres of daffodils and swears by liquid fertilizer. It takes granular fertilizer two weeks or more to make its way down and be in a usable form in heavy soils. He believes in a balanced fertilizer low in nitrogen plus soluble potash (0-0-60) that would be applied by a siphon injector, i.e., attach the bottle to the hose. His recipe is large – 10 oz of potash dissolved per 100 gallons of water. This 200 parts per million is the ration considered "constant watering", i.e., equals 1 inch of rain to 161 square feet. To keep a neutral soil, we recommend Clay Higgins' South Carolina beach mix, a 40 lb bag of 5-10-5 with a five pound bag of 0-0-60 potash without sulfur. The result is 5-10-20 or 5-10-22 and the recipe is dividable. A good "dash" of superphosphate and your fall roots will be happy. Step one is always the same – a 6" to 8" deep soil sample and IFAS test to determine what needs to be added to get the numbers right. Most nurseries, including Tallahassee Nurseries, carry the 5 lb bag of potash. Remember the minimum phosphorus is 60 and potassium is 150 ppm and the maximum is 200 ppm for each. Potash is needed twice a year, once when roots are forming and again after blooming to assist the bulbs' photosynthesis process.

THE SHOW

The annual daffodil show as a Saturday success – lots of folks, including WCTV, new members signed up and we started to celebrate Saint David's Day – the patron saint of Wales, whose symbol is the daffodil. Tiffany looked great on the eleven o'clock news! Too bad they didn't say the show continued on Sunday.

Well, there wasn't much to celebrate on Sunday: a freezing cold, windy, miserable day. Some people did brave the weather.

The show looked different – the garden look (plants and greenery between the daffodils) was replaced by a low key flower show that floated on a sea of green tablecloths. Informal bouquets, dafs brought by members and colorful arrangements by Charlotte Watkins, Colette Valee, Tracey Allen and Mary Maude Sharpe balanced the 52 varieties with their black stands and info cards. Jan Godfrey helped with the flower picking prior to the show and Tracey Allen collected the dafs and presented arrangements and door prizes at the Tallahassee Garden Club's Spring Meeting. Other volunteers were Lori Johnson, Tiffany Bourassa, Mary Ann Tonnacliff, Carol Allen and Pete Millett.

ANNUAL MEETING

May 16, 2009

9:15 AM

at Goodwood Museums & Gardens
Tallahassee, Florida

There are no bylaw changes on the agenda. The nominated slate of officers for 2009-10 is as follows:

President	Lori Johnson
1 st Vice President	Tiffany Bourassa
2 nd Vice President	Margaret Feaster
Secretary	Carol Allen
Treasurer	Pete Millett
Past President	Emily Millett

Everyone is welcome to attend.

NOMENCLATURE

It's happening again! From the start, daffodils were named and then grouped by observed characteristics. Serious classification of hybrids was first undertaken in Britain by Dean William Herbert (1837) and later by Baker in 1875. Since then, there have been so many names and different lists that in 1908 the Royal Horticultural Society issued the "classified list." A major overhaul was done in 1950 and color coding was added by Tom Throckmorton (American Daffodil Society) in 1977. The 1998 revision of the classification of genus *Narcissus*, *Amaryllidaceae* family was heavily based on chromosome count and patterns. Up to now, classification has been

human endeavor influenced by the author's tendency to be a splitter or a lumper. *Flora Europaea* is a lean classification and does not include species or subspecies found in Africa. It is this classification that is referenced in the latest research headed by B.Z.M. Zonneveld, Institute of Molecular Plant Studies, Clusius Laboratory, Leiden University, Holland. His research with nuclear DNA content changes the species head count. There are now eleven sections, two subgenera and a total of thirty-six species; nine more than listed in *Flora Europaea*. The abstract, printed in the March 2009 *American Daffodil Society Journal* concludes:

Flow cytometry is shown to produce easily obtainable insights and original systematic data that lead to new insights. Genome size or c-value turns out to be the most salient feature to define the status of the species in the genus *Narcissus*.

If you would like to read the paper, here is the address, go to www.springerlink.com and search on "Zonneveld narcissus" The article is *The systematic value of nuclear DNA content for all species of Narcissus L. (Amaryllidaceae)*

BITS AND PIECES

Interested in southern history and old gardens? Greg Freeman, ADS and Georgia Daffodil Society member, has a web site: www.southernedition.com. If you go to that site and scroll down below "Following are some examples of stories you can enjoy when you explore the pages of *Southern Edition*" you'll find a fascinating article titled *Daffodils in Early Southern Gardens*, by none other than Sara Van Beck. The article includes some of her recent research for her new book which has the working title of *A Selective History of Daffodils in America*. Sara's article on Florida daffodil farms will be published in the upcoming issue of *Florida Gardening*.

[Daffodils in Florida: A Field Guide to the Coastal South](#) is now available on Amazon.com.

Goodwood News: The FDS will complete the restoration of the 1912-1913 Campenelle Walk this year. The spiky plants in urns that were used as path markers will be replaced with softer, user friendly plants.

Watch for Your Bulb Sale Mailing!
Order deadline will be mid-June.