

Midwest Region Newsletter

May, 2020



From your RVP—

Welcome to our seventh short newsletter.

The brighter side of this year is that it is almost possible to keep up with all of the garden chores that should be done. For daffodils, we had an excellent early and midseason here, and then the weather showed us that paradise could be somewhat reined in.

Along with the ADS cancellation of the Fall Forum, we may also find it wise to cancel our own regional meeting. We may, however, look forward to an active ADS eBay auction at least to get some bulbs exchanged. Let's keep thinking about this.

Meanwhile, in this newsletter we have some observations that some of our members have shared on standouts of the season. And, photography contests have produced work that displays the talents of some of our members.

--Jim Wilson, jim@wilsonjh.org

"Picasso said that no one has to explain a daffodil. Good design is understandable to virtually everybody. You never have to ask why."

--Hugh Newell Jacobsen

Our 2022 (2023?) ADS National Convention

Our convention committee has been moving forward with planning, concentrating on contract finalization amid difficult times for hotels. It is our region's obligation to host the convention following the Pennsylvania one, which could possibly be postponed until 2022. Whenever it happens, we need to focus our energies on how to do it and make it a good one. All ideas and thoughts are welcome. Please send them to convention chairs [Sara Kinne](#) and [Jeanne Lager](#).

Standout Daffodils of the Season

Daniel Bellinger: 'Causeway Gem' 6y-y (Derrick Turbitt, Northern Ireland) opened in my garden on April 8, and shows no sign of fading 3 weeks later. It has faced deep, wet snow, wind, repeated frosts, and hail-like rain. Its balanced form avoids the too-wide petals that ruin the looks of many standard division 6s. It is like a large miniature. Every visitor to my garden has noticed it. The color is like Bryanston 2y-y, its seed parent.

The other flower every visitor has spotted and praised is 'Miss Primm' 2y-y (Ken Dorwin, USA). Well-shaped and smooth with rich, vibrant yellow color, it too has lasted and lasted. Stem and poise are an actual 10. Every flower in its row is Best-in-Show quality.

After these two, 'Anna Akhmatova' 2w-w and 'Hello! 1w-y (John Reed) would be Best-in-Show contenders. 'Hello!' is John's best 1w-y to date, much better even than 'Windy City' 1w-y, which has won Gold at a National. The long, pure yellow trumpet complements and balances the smooth ring

of perianth segments.

'Anna Akhmatova' 2w-w was large and very, very smooth again this year. Yet it has a delicacy that is hard to explain. It is so much a lady. It is the most feminine of all my flowers. Moreso even than myeg Yerger poets. For show, I would have needed to work on the cup.

Another flower just opening will probably complete the top 5: 'Killearnan' 3w-gyr (John Lea, England). Already I can't stop looking at it.

Other outstanding flowers this year include 'Beauty Rest' 2w-p, 'Clandonation' 2y-y, 'Bbob Drake' 1y/w-y, 'Golden Peak' 1y-y, 'Stacie Humm' 7w-w, 'Max' 11ay-yyr, 'River Queen' 2w-w, 'Muiranna' 1y-y, and 'Maria Pia' 11ay-r.

One of my jonquils, 'Onota' 7w-w, opens yellow, fades to a bright pale yellow, then fades to white. The flowers are large for a jonquil, like a smooth, flat intermediate division 2. All upright, all staring you in the eye. While in this pale yellow stage, nothing in the garden can touch it for beauty. It draws you across the garden.

My late yellow-reds, most 3s and most of the poets are still in tight bud. It will be exciting to see what else may appear in the garden.

Mary Lou Gripshover: Ok, 5 standout daffodils, in order of blooming:

1. Prologue, an oldie but goodie, almost always the first standard to open here.
2. Honeybird and Lemon Desire—a tie. Similar coloring
3. Geometrics for its precise form. California Classic for its bright cup color.
4. Big Mo and Tristan's Memory—another tie. A clump of either one makes a great yellow statement.
5. Cavalryman, but I have to include Fragrant Rose as it's always one of my favorites.

However, the above are not the flowers I anticipate the most each year. I have cut way back on the number of cultivars I grow, so the ones I look for are my own seedlings. As most of my hybridizing was done after show season, they bloom later.

1. Mount Adams and Ohio Valley—both whites that are doing well and bloom later in the season.

2. 2000-06-03. 2 W-P/W maybe? Not a show flower, but a showy one. The color in the corona is not even, judges wouldn't like it.
3. Shawnee Run 7 Y-W which almost always blooms into May. Not this year.
4. Miami Trace and Sandburg, both poets, Sandburg has the deeper color.
5. Final Curtain. Always the last to bloom here.

And of course there are a few miniatures. *N. jonquilla* (various forms and heights collected in Spain) puts on a good show, as does Baby Moon. And I like *N. fernandesii* var. *cordubensis* for the same reason.

Sara Kinne: [From Jason Delaney] Historic tazetta daffodil, *Narcissus* 'Early Splendor', from before 1938. As its name implies, this early flowering cultivar is generally one of the first to open among the hardy tazetta or poetaz group. Broad foliage, smooth and quite rounded stems, and smooth florets more starry than round set it apart from another great (and often mixed in the trade) tazetta, *N.* 'Geranium', generally opening a few days later on taller stems with an overall chunkier appearance (photos 3-4, lower left, for comparison). Intensely fragrant, and a fine addition to the early spring garden. *N.* 'Early Splendor' will be available this year from phsdaffodils.com.



Mike Kuduk: This has been such an unusual year. Without any shows to go to, we admired our flowers in their natural setting, and for the first time were able to make a significant number of crosses. Our late April freeze did a lot of them in, but it looks like the survivors got through Friday night's freeze OK, so we will see what those bring.

On to favorite daffodils for this year:

1. Helen Link's "Titmouse" has been a favorite of ours for years. It is one of the few white perianth division 2's to bloom very early, usually at a time when early yellow trumpets and 6's are out. It looks great en masse and is an excellent show flower. It won best classic single stem at this year's convention, and we have used it effectively in early collections.



2. The garden winner was a Mitsch flower called "Excitement". We have a big bed which was planted when I had pneumonia a few years ago, and I'll say hypoxia does not lead to effective planting. We spent a lot of time labelling the bed, and "Excitement" stood sentry at the end of the bed. It didn't care about the hard freeze and was among the few flowers which were still upright, and it set seed too. Fantastic! (no picture)
3. John Reed's "American Gold" was a standout in the garden. It has perfect form, great size and substance, and a strong upright stem.



4. Mid to late season we came across a planting of big, nearly perfect yellow division 2 flowers. As they were not in one of our show beds, we had to dig around for the tag, which read "Golden Sheen". The flowers were fabulous. It's an old Brian Duncan cultivar we picked up at one of the Reed digs. When we asked Brian about it via Facebook, he said "he had forgotten all about it". We haven't.



5. Dan Bellinger's "Mary Rutledge" was spectacular. Many in the region have seen this at the Columbus show. It is spectacular in person. "Bbob Drake" gets honorable mention.



I enclosed photos of a few other scenes – the secretary's desk, and two of our assistant gardeners, Finn the pit bull, and Jekyll the cat. They both need work.



Naomi Liggett: My most outstanding was Pipit. The color was deep yellow with very white cup. 2 or 3 florets per stem.

Kathleen Simpson: This was an incredibly good season for me, and I could have easily picked 50 standouts! Really, I tried to use this season the other way around, reasoning that any daffodil that was marginal this year was never going to make it in my garden and could be purged. The quality of bloom was excellent, color was ok, and multiplication rate was phenomenal.

I usually lose about 5% of my varieties over the summer/winter, things that either disappear without a reason or finally give up the ghost after a few years of declining bloom. This year I had less than 1%! I've always blamed rot in my heavy clay (that I don't leave fallow as long as I should between daffodil rotations) but it was just as wet as usual last summer/fall, and then an incredibly wet winter and spring. So now I wonder how much of my loss is because of harsh winters. Maybe that's why I lose very few poets - they're supposed to be extra hardy. I actually had a few things come back from the dead, including two show-worthy blooms from Silent Valley, which I thought didn't even have foliage last year.

So what I thought I'd do is focus on the bulbs I got for the first time in 2016, and which went into a raised bed which I built that year. I plan to dig it next year (yeah, yeah, should really dig it this year, but I'm perpetually behind) so I made a lot of notes this year as to what was special and what could be purged. Generally, I try to do a heavy purge the first rotation, because it seems harder to get rid of something later. So here's notes on the stand-outs and some more general notes about what didn't perform well. You can consider this advance publicity for next year's auction and swap.

Culver, 3 Y-Y, is easily the best 3 Y-Y for show I've had. None of the older varieties has ever grown to show standards for me (not even New Penny, not even this year) so I'm trying some of Reed's newer varieties. I wholeheartedly recommend Culver. It's a strong grower, great size, substance and color, and most blooms are show quality.

Demitasse, 12 W-Y, is a Pannill bulb that I got via a

private trade. It grows like a weed (and few Pannill bulbs grow at all for me) and is so lovely. Well, ok, it's really "sooo cute!" It's also a good show flower, especially valuable for collections. I'm going to try some of this at the edge of the woods next year, because I think it would look beautiful as a fake wild flower.

Doily, 9 W-GYR, a small and very late poet from Evans. This is pretty and a decent grower but basically just another poet. What makes it a standout is that it is one of the last 5 daffodils to bloom in my garden, even later than recurvus.

Happy End, 7 Y-Y, from Helen Link and **Hope Taft**, 7 W-O, from Mary Lou Gripshover, both purchased from the Carney's and both quite rare. Not all jonquillas do well in WV, but both of these have clumped up well, bloom toward the end of the season, have a light pleasant fragrance and are both showable and beautiful. This year they were outstanding.

Laura Lee, 5 W-W, Bill Ticknor's only registered daffodil, bought from Mary Lou at the 2016 ADS auction. It is beautifully dainty, very well formed, and has flourished and multiplied in my garden much above the usual puny div 5 performance. I love this one!

Sabre, 2 Y-R, from Brogden by way of the fall bulb exchange. This is incredibly bright, excellent for show, and an outstanding grower. I may actually dig this one this year because the 3 bulbs in 2016 had 14 excellent blooms this year. Few downunder bulbs do well in my WV garden, but the Brogden bulbs are an exception.

Thrice, 11c W-P, from the Havens, purchased from Oakwood. I know there's not a 11c designation, but there should be. Thrice has 3 perianth segments and 3 blanks. It also has show quality perianth, luscious color, heavy substance, tall strong stems and is a good grower. I love everything about this flower.

Now the other end of the scale. I added 17 NZ bulbs that year, and only Sabre is outstanding. I know they can be lovely because I've admired them in shows, but few have thrived in my garden. I'm going to completely purge at least 1/3 of these next year.

There's also a number of flowers that don't really work for show but that I like. They'll be moved out of the show beds and try their luck in my meadow. There's several poets, a cute pink jonquil

(Peppermint Crème), Throckmorton varieties (I collect them as garden plants), a couple of older div 6's, things like that.

One of the failures that does grieve me is Angel's Breath, an adorable miniature 5 Y-Y. I've tried it several places, including in this bed, and they've all dwindled away. I think I may try it on a steep south facing hill. Or maybe in a pot and give it winter protection? I really would like this one to grow!

Jim and Janet Wilson: Our best yellow trumpet this year was **Juergen** (Reed, 2014), consistently smooth and with a great pose,



but we still like Chobe River, Barnesgold, and Millennium Perfection too.

We agree with others that **Miss Primm** (Dorwin, 1976) is excellent among the yellow 2s, along with Happy Valley, Impeccable, and Wow!. We love 5s lately, and besides our favorites, like World Class, we've also really liked **Yellow Ocean** (van der Veek, 2017), maybe partly because we have some ocean-sized plantings of it and partly because it consistently produces four or five florets per stem.



This year **Avalanche** (Smith, 1955), finally did well for us; we'd seen it do well elsewhere, and so we knew it had it in it. Whites are always favorites, and although we only had one blooming plant of it, **White Tea** (Postles, 1994) was impressive for substance and smoothness—we're looking forward to see how it does in future years, maybe giving I Love You and our old favorite Snowboard some competition. Amy Linea was nice among the 3s. **Wink 'o Green** (Duncan, 2013) stood out as a late season star, staying up to greet the irises and looking great and perky as many others had given up. Golden Echo and Blushing Lady were 7s that had also looked especially good.

Welcome New Members!

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Photo Contests

The Esker Farms virtual show is in its final week, and we've been glad to see participation from members of the Region. Especially worthy of mention is a category win by Thomas Kinder, 8, one of our youth members.



The IDS photography show is now completed and judged, and the photographs can be viewed on the IDS [website](#). Congratulations to Grand Prize Winner Julie Turner, Youth Grand Prize Winner Olivia Rockey, and all participants!

In addition, the Mid-Atlantic region held an ADS photography contest too. Some of their entries were stunning. You can take a look [here](#).