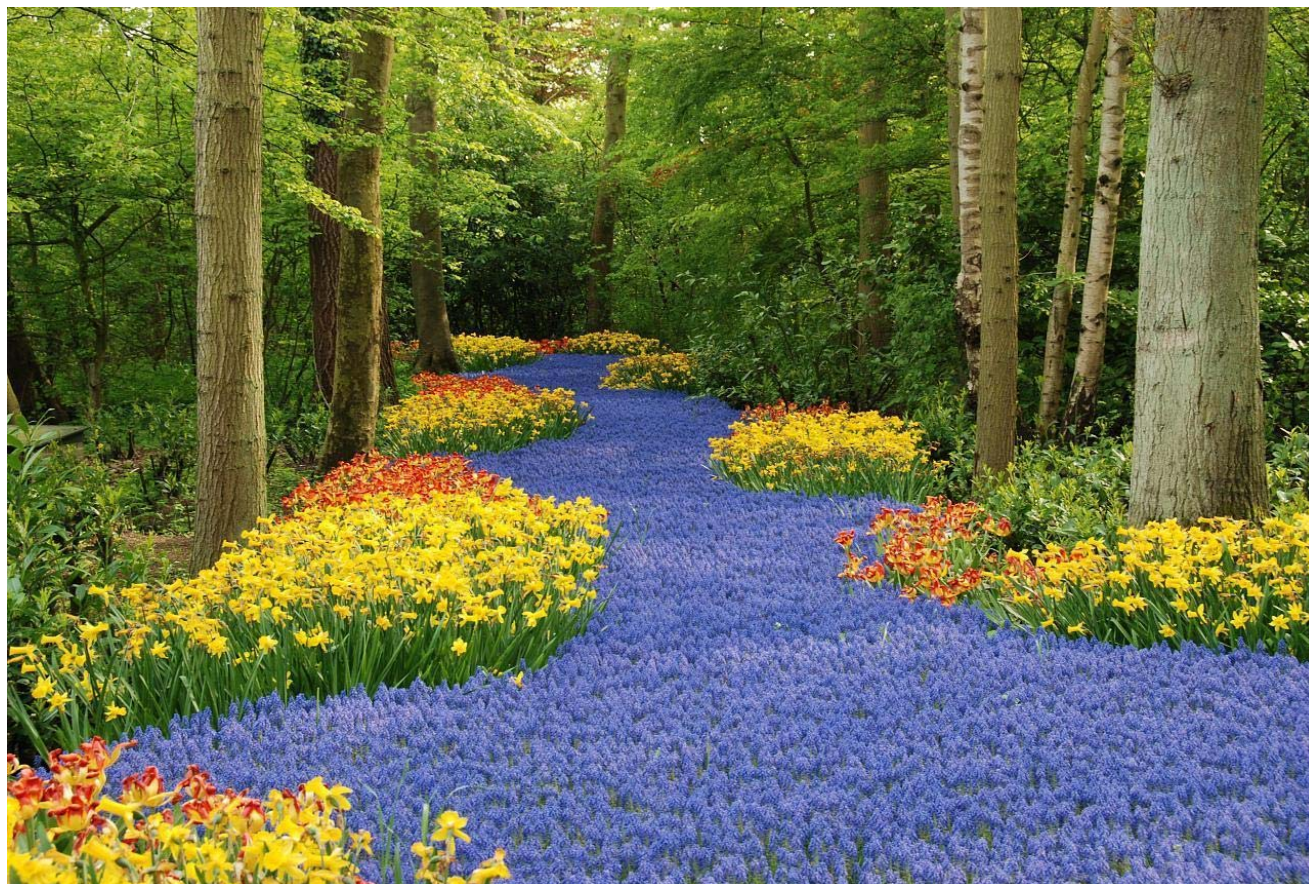


The Trumpet

Winter, 2010-2011

NEWSLETTER OF *The Kentucky Daffodil and Bulb Society*



Tulipe de keukenhof

PHOTO © by **David130r** on Flickr

Keukenhof (“Kitchen garden”), also known as the **Garden of Europe**, is situated near Lisse, Netherlands, in an area called the “Dune and Bulb Region” and is the world’s largest flower garden. According to the official website for the Keukenhof Park, approximately 7,000,000 flower bulbs are planted annually in the park, which covers an area of 32 hectares. It is open annually from the last week in March to mid-May. The best time to view the tulips is around mid-April, depending on the weather. [This note, using Wikipedia content, is licensed under the Creative Commons BY-SA License.]



Daffodils ‘Sweet Smiles’ 7 W-P, ‘Pistachio’ 1 Y-Y, ‘Delnashaugh’ 4 W-P, and ‘Intrigue’ 7 Y-W

PHOTOS courtesy of Brent and Becky’s Bulbs

Dear KDABERS,

I cannot believe it is already December. I'm not ready; I need a longer November to finish garden chores. Oh well—soon it will be too cold and snowy. Time to put undone projects on the next year's planning list!

Shortly we will be planning KDABS activities for next year. The board will present suggestions at our January 15th meeting. Your ideas and suggestions will be most important as we finalize 2011 year long activities.

This meeting should be most educational and interesting. We gave a talk to the Audubon Garden Club in November. It was very well received. Ruth Mougey did a PowerPoint presentation titled "Spring Bulbs." I think you will find it most informative. Even better you will be able to see it and hear it as we use our new projector and mike system.

We are developing a speakers bureau within the club. Anyone who likes to study or has expertise and wants to share their knowledge is welcome to participate.

While preparing for a review of classification of daffodils and tulips, I learned about the difference between scientific classification and horticultural classification.

Scientific classification is a botanical classification which gives all plants two Latin names. These names are universally recognized as genus name followed by species name. For example *Narcissus* (genus name) *poeticus* (species name) or *Narcissus poeticus*.

More broadly, the classification of groups of living things is the branch of science called taxonomy. All life forms are organized by structural and internal characteristics, for example:

within the plant kingdom, two often recognized subkingdoms are subkingdom 'Embryophyta' (which

forms embryos), e.g., bulbs, and subkingdom 'Bryophyta', e.g., mosses.

The taxonomy continues with phylum, class, order, family, and finally genus, species, (all with sub ranks if needed), variety and cultivar. I'm not going to try to explain all of this since I'm just a student, but this has piqued my interest. Remember high school biology? I retained little from that years ago information, but genus, species, variety, and cultivar have become relevant terms as I study catalogs and make purchases. Perhaps one of you can explain this system much better than my feeble attempt.

Horticultural classification is a system of identifying different species and varieties based on observable characteristics. The Royal Horticultural Society established the 13 divisions of daffodils based on observable characteristics of each daffodil. We can recognize the common characteristics of each daffodil, when we know the RHS system of classification. For example, our 2010 club bulb 'Wave' is division IV, one or more flowers to the stem with doubling of the perianth (petals) or the corona (cup) or both.

By using this system we can more effectively garden, and compete in daffodil shows. I think of it as a tool to be used. We will learn more horticultural classifications as we study tulips, crocus, liliiums and other bulbs. I found this information most interesting. I hope you do too.

I'm looking forward to 2011's activities as I mentally review 2010. This has been a very rewarding and successful year. Much has been accomplished, all of it with dedication, hard work and good humor. You all have brought energy & enthusiasm to all of our projects. I am truly anticipating the stimulation and fun that comes with working with you when we get together. I wish you the best of holidays and look forward to seeing you in January.

PAT E.

The Trumpet

The Trumpet is the newsletter of the *Kentucky Daffodil and Bulb Society*, and is brought to you four times a year by the editors, Janet and Jim Wilson, and their great group of writers.

Officers of the Society:

President: Pat Evans 502-245-6531

Vice President: Ruth Mougey 502-732-5559

Secretary: Kim Keller 502-810-8102

Treasurer: Richard Porter 502-584-7284

By-laws are available on our web site,
<http://www.kdabs.org>

Reproduction in whole or in part of the publication without the written permission of the editors is prohibited. If you would like to use an article, just drop us a line and we will most likely grant you permission after consulting with the author.

If you would like to submit an article, please send it by e-mail to dwarfiris@insightbb.com or mail it to our address, 2303 Stonybrook Ct., LaGrange, KY 40031. Deadline for the spring issue is March 1, 2011.

Save a Tree? And postage!

If you have e-mail and would like to receive your newsletter electronically, let me know, and you could possibly get it a day earlier, perhaps with some of the inside pictures in color! Just drop me a line at dwarfiris@insightbb.com and I'll sign you up. Thanks to those of you who have already signed up.

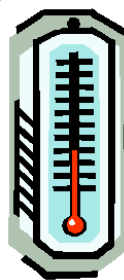
—Janet

What Now in the Garden

by Bill Evans

The season has sure been exceptionally dry up until just recently. For our daffodils this means a very good dormancy period. Although what we see now after the killing frost is little or no activity above ground, things are beginning to really develop underground at the base of the planted bulbs. What's happening is the start of the next active growing cycle - root growth and bud development. This root and bud development cycle happens when the soil temperature drops and the soil moisture content rises. Our bulbs begin to put down their root systems and further develop the bud(s). Moisture is really needed at this time (early and late Fall) to allow a supportive root system to develop and keep the developing bud sufficiently nourished. If the moisture is insufficient, that is less than about 2 inches total average for the late summer through the late fall early winter season the stress on the bulb will most likely result in bloom that is of smaller size and lesser quality. On the other hand, an over abundance of moisture to the point of not draining away will cause other undesirable effects like root and bulb rot, fungal development and viral infection. So, if you watered your garden to keep things going until we just recently got some well needed rain you should be in good shape as long as you didn't over do it. And as dry as it has been how could you?

Let me go back to soil temperature for just a moment. The soil temperature is one of the major triggers for the development of root growth. Once started the root growth continues to develop until the temperature drops to 3 degrees Celsius or about 37 degrees Fahrenheit. At that temperature the root growth stalls but doesn't completely stop. Interestingly enough when the temperature rises just about 1 degree above to 4 degrees Celsius or about 39 degrees Fahrenheit the growth resumes a normal pace and the bud continues



to develop. So what is happening right now with our bulbs is extensive root development at the basal plate and the development of the flower bud and stem in the center of the bulb.

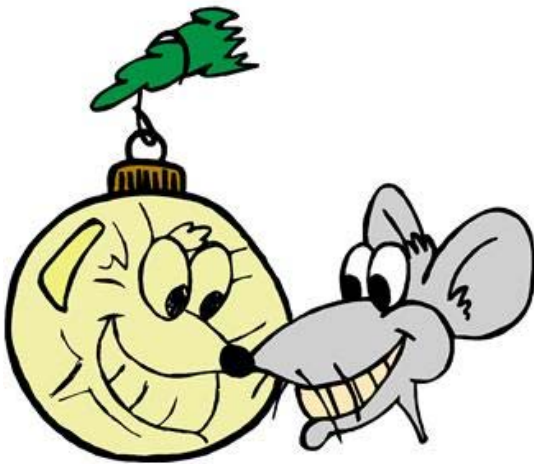
Now is a good time to spread a little light helping of fertilizer to supply adequate nutrient to the bulbs. I like to use 5-10-10 or 6-12-12. (Does everybody understand what those 5-10-10 and 6-12-12 numbers mean? Yeh, you're right, I'm going to tell you anyway. What they tell you is the percentage by volume of the elements nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium or potash. For example 5-10-10 is 5% nitrogen, 10% phosphorus, and 10% potassium by volume - the remaining 75% being inert matter or filler) OK, just make sure the nitrogen number is not above the single digit value. High nitrogen has a tendency to produce basal plate rot in the bulbs as a result of nitrogen burn. Using a slow release fertilizer is excellent and gets you away from this problem as long as the nitrogen number is reasonably low - single digits or low teens. Spread lightly and work it into the soil. Personally the very best thing to use is well composted organic matter. Add it anytime and work it into your garden. The compost will put into the soil all the nutrient the bulbs will need, provide better drainage, and move the pH to the optimum level for superior growth and development. It also contains all those micronutrients that most of the other fertilizers don't. Use the compost and you'll soon notice the difference in the quality and the health of all your plants.



Speaking of adding things to the soil we, Patty and I (depending on time and availability - meaning my time and Patty's availability or is it the other way around?) like to mulch as much as is possible as soon as the temps go below the 45 degree mark - even better after a freeze. This helps to maintain the cool in the soil provided you use a couple of inches of mulch. We try to remember that shallow plantings warm earlier as do plantings on the south facings near foundations. So we have to choose the plantings with that thought in mind as well as good helpings of mulch. By the way we've noticed some early bird daffodils that have already sprouted. Yes, they are on the south side, and we mulch them a little more than the others after it gets colder. These early birds will probably experience some winter burn but the flower buds won't put in an appearance, and so far we haven't noticed any change in either the amount or quality of the flowers. These varieties in our yard are species and bulbs from Australia and New Zealand. In the case of the species I believe this is a normal process and part of their genetic makeup. The Aussie and New Zealand type is another matter which deserves more study on my part. I'm not sure if this is due to differences in seasons that the bulb experiences from growing in the Southern Hemisphere as opposed to growing in the Northern Hemisphere. In any event the objective on our part is to slow down the rate of growth by keeping the soil cool after it gets colder. One other thought here should be noted. If you see this happening to your bulbs, they may be planted too shallow and should be covered with more soil, or replanted more deeply.

During the fall sale I heard a number of folks say that the trouble with bulbs is the critters dig them up and eat them. So if have you seen those little tree rodents running around your yard feasting on those bulbs you just planted, I can tell you it isn't the daffodils they are feasting on, but it might well be the other bulbs you planted. The daffodils contain the poison colchicum, extremely toxic, but used in minute amounts medicinally to treat gout in humans. On the other hand the other bulbs - tulips and crocus to name but a few are very tasty to the critters. Something about the odor from the tunic or outer paperlike covering of

the bulb is very enticing to the critters. What to do? There are several measures you can take. The best ones to use are taken before you plant. Things like dip the bulbs in Bulb Guard or Ropel. Interplant with bulbs that the critters don't like. Daffodils, alliums, and fritillaries are good choices. Of course, don't plant what the critters like. Put a barricade around the bulbs when you plant - chicken wire or hardware cloth. Your planted bulbs on the other hand require a different strategy.

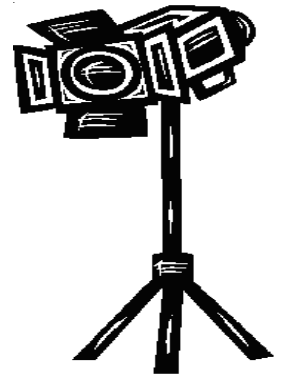


Trap the critters is one. Try offering the critters tastier and easier to get to options like peanuts, corn on the cob or shelled if you prefer. You could also add a special sauce to the offerings if you want it to be their last supper although not an especially good idea if you have kids and pets in the neighborhood .

Now is also an excellent time to be thinking about and planning the next season's activities in the garden. Make your lists and schedule your activities. Update your garden plot plans and don't forget to clean, sharpen and oil your tools.

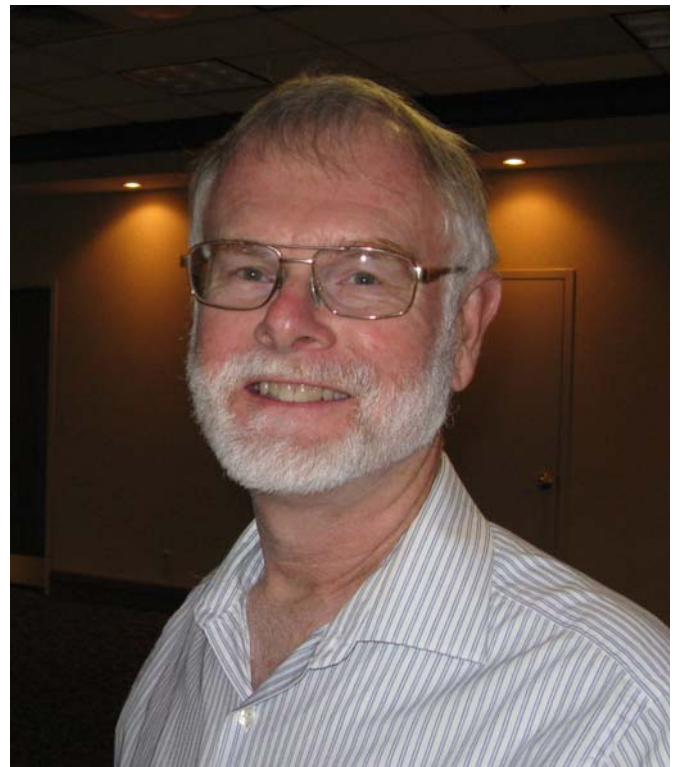
Until next season, the Very Best of the Holiday Season to you and yours !!!!!

Bill (Still planting bulbs as long as I can dig) Evans



Member Spotlight

Bill Carroll



What got you originally interested in daffodils?

When I was much younger, my dad took me for rides in the country. He showed me a field with daffodils and said "That's where my house used to be." He could tell where it was by the flowers. I always loved to see daffodils all around an open field.

What are your favorite daffodil varieties?

The jonquil 'Sweet Smiles' was an early favorite, along with 'Intrigue' and 'Pistachio' and 'Delnashaugh'. [See cover photos.]

Also, I had never seen *poeticus* until I moved to Louisville. I once had to move a large number of them in full bloom and was taken by their tiny cups.

What do you enjoy about KDABS?

I enjoy the people and their enthusiasm for bulbs. I especially like Pat and Bill Evans' work to promote bulbs that are not commonly grown.

How would you like to see KDABS grow?

I already see the club growing. I like it that we sold lilies and would like us to make even more available, especially summer bulbs to expand us. I like the alliums--*schubertii* is great, even dried, and *karataviense* is another great one. I have a pale pinkish silver one, the size of a hardball or softball about 10" high.

I like the minor bulbs too. Glory of the Snow (*Chionodoxa*), which I first saw at Cave Hill, comes in so many colors and is underused, as is Rolf Fiedler (*Ipheion*).

Another direction is to grow some non-hardy bulbs, such as Lily of the Nile (*Agapanthus*).

What other flower organizations do you belong to?

The peony society, hosta society, daylily groups, and I'm interested in the international lily association.

What other hobbies do you have?

Hiking, visiting botanical gardens, collecting and growing seeds of arid plants. I like many varieties of Penstemon. It's also nice just to sit down in springtime amidst wild daffodils.

Does anyone else in your family garden?

My wife is establishing a vegetable garden, lots of tomatoes and peppers, in our front yard, hiding it

behind ornamental grasses, so that the squirrels and other critters won't see it.

What was your most successful gardening experience?

I worked on a garden for a couple who live in Prospect, taking out a row of boxwood along the front sidewalk and built hills to create a rolling cascade of blooms--scores of varieties and hundreds of daffodils, tulips, hyacinths, camassia, and many small bulbs. People would pull into the driveway and take pictures.

I was also proud of an organic vegetable garden I did at UK. I was the first student at UK to have one.

Disastrous experience?

I tried growing a lot of foxtail lilies (*Eremurus*). They died. Maybe it was too wet for them. Many locations here seem to benefit from addition of gravel or granite for some kinds of plants.

What is your one gardening dream?

A botanical garden for Louisville. Atlanta's is a fantastic model. To be successful, it really needs a good location.

Anything else you'd like to tell our members?

Cheekwood, not too far, is just one example of a fantastic place to see a wide variety of the plants we love in a beautiful setting. I think we all benefit from travel, to see the diversity of the plant world, and to grow more unusual plants.



The Things You Learn One Way or Another

by Ruth Mougey

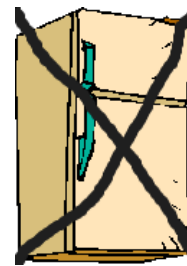
Recently, Pat and I had the opportunity to speak about bulbs to the Audubon Garden Club. I am sure Pat will be writing more on that but preparing the talk was a good opportunity for me to learn some more about bulbs and I did! I also want to thank Janet and Jim Wilson for lending me their brand spanking new, hadn't even had a chance to read them copies of Brent & Becky Heath's books on Daffodils and Tulips. I also put in an order for books on daffodils or bulbs from my local Carrollton Public Library. There is a lot of material out there, some of it contradictory but it was fun to find out some interesting factoids.

Did you know that the "cut flower" trade drives the daffodil and tulip markets? It seems that growers of bulbs for cut flowers not only want beautiful flowers but also choose only those that force well out of season. So the preferences of the bulb buyer for their own home garden has little to do with most of the bulb market. That is why the availability of so many cultivars is limited to some of the specialty growers.

This is a good place to remind ourselves what a great deal the KDABS daffodil bulb sales are. There were over 35 cultivars of daffodils for sale, and most were ones I did not have, and this was my third year buying bulbs from the sale! When you buy inexpensive bulbs from the big box stores or expensive bulbs from the garden centers, the selection is pretty limited, and all too often "a mixture" of bulbs with a great picture is what is offered but not necessarily delivered. All too often these mixtures are just the whoopsies or the leftovers from the warehouse floor and bear no resemblance to what is on the packaging. I used to make this mistake myself because I wanted to plant huge quantities of bulbs, so price was important to me. Now I am sorry because if I had been a little more selective, for about the same money I could have had a much more varied and interesting spring bulb garden. It's the same lesson over and over again. If a

store bases its offerings on cheap prices and large sales volumes, then what you are buying is lots of cheap stuff. The bulbs you purchase at our KDABS sale are tried and true varieties grown in Kentuckiana that you may not see on offer anywhere else, and you know that they will increase and make your spring time garden more and more beautiful each year.

Did you know? There are daffodils that thrive in the south and in fact have naturalized and grow in the ditches. I had always been told that you had to buy pre-chilled bulbs in order to have daffodils in the south.



I also found out why my tulips tend to split into many small offset bulbs with no flowers after a few seasons in the ground. Tulips need more fertilizer than other bulbs to flourish, especially in the fall when you cannot see them! So if you want to help them perennialize, pick the types that are not too hybridized (Darwin, Early, Kaufmanniana, Fosteriana, and Gregii) or plant more species types, plant them deep, and top dress with a good bulb fertilizer (organic 5-10-12 is my preference). Top dressing with the fertilizer is recommended because the roots are especially sensitive to burning.



I should also mention that deadheading is important for tulips and not so much for daffodils. It seems that daffodils are so much more difficult for Mother Nature to pollinate than tulips that many kinds do not set viable seed and so the effort of deadheading is not as important.

Tulips like a dry hot summer while they are dormant so Pat Evans reports that digging them after the foliage

is dying and storing them in the garage for replanting is part of her plan.

Another past mistake I have made is to plant too few tulips of one type at a time and so missed out on the impact they can make in mass plantings. While any flower is appreciated, the appearance of one or two lonely tulips in a bed is pitiful when compared to the look of a dozen or so all in full bloom. One author recommends using a triangular planting style for bulbs with the narrow point of the triangle facing toward the front of the flower bed to heighten their impact in the flower bed, and I am going to try this next year. For example, plant 10 bulbs of Orange Princess in 4 rows with each shorter row in front of the other (4, 3, 2, 1 or 14 bulbs in 5, 4, 3, 1).



Have you tried using Muscarii (grape hyacinths) as marker bulbs? One author recommended this and since I have always overplanted my daffodils and tulips with some kind of small bulb, I realized how helpful it has been to see the grape hyacinths showing their foliage in the fall and reminding me exactly where I have bulbs already planted.

I also learned that many fall planted bulbs like fritillaria that are non-tunicate bulbs which cannot dry out and must be planted as soon as they are received. This would explain why these bulbs have not grown well for me in the past. They never had a chance because they had been dug, packaged and put on sale in a heated store for weeks perhaps before I ever bought them. Next year I plan to order this kind of bulb early from a reliable supplier and even pot them up if I cannot decide where I want to plant them until later.

Another good hint about bulb planting and those tiny corms that are hard to tell which side is the root side

and which is the stem. Try planting them on their side and the roots will pull the bulb right side up. I tried this with the Eranthis I bought at the Hidden Hill sale after I soaked them overnight before planting. I am hoping for a good show from these bulbs next spring. Perhaps the best way to obtain these bulbs is to get the freshly dug bulbs right before the foliage completely withers. After I saw them flourishing at Helen Trueblood's I realized what a great bulb they are for the woodland garden.

Varmints in the bulb garden! Judging by the amount of discussion on this topic it's a huge problem for some gardeners. The voles (small, mouse-like with no tail) are probably the worst offenders, and for those my best luck has been to plant daffodils encircling their preferred meals of tulips and other tasty bulbs. The smell and taste of daffodils and fritillaries is supposed to deter them. Of course those pesky moles create the tunnels that voles use to get to your bulbs, and so being vigilant about their tunnels or using a barrier to discourage them will also help.



A new idea I learned about squirrels is interesting. They can be deterred by simply placing a framed window screen on top of your newly planted and mulched bulbs. Squirrels do their damage while they are planting their fall acorns, buckeyes etc. When they come across something tasty, one can only imagine their pleasure as they have a snack after the hard work of burying an acorn. After winter sets in, just remove the anchor and pick up the frame. This idea made more sense than the suggestion to just feed squirrels peanuts to bribe them to leave your bulbs alone! I did not think this would work as we already feed them bird seed (not by design but by default) and have the fattest, sassiest squirrels in KY, just ask our dogs.



For years, I have used up valuable greenhouse space for the storage of tender bulbs as I did not have good luck using other methods, but a recent discovery of some leftover bulbs from last year has me ready to try something new. This year I am trying to pot up tender bulbs in moist sand after first having dried them off for a few days and having stored them in the walk-in cooler in our garage. Our garage was once the farm office of an 800-acre farm and has 2 walk-in refrigeration units with 5-inch thick doors. The compressors died long ago, but we have learned that things don't freeze in there, and so Don uses one for his bonsai, and I get some space in the one used for bird seed storage. I stick my fall bulbs in there too (in their vented plastic packages) until I get them planted as it's a pretty stable environment. Last year I "forgot" I had not planted some daffodil bulbs and in February I found them--1 package--and planted them. Most came up although only a few bloomed. It will be interesting to see how those bulbs do. I also found another package of 'Avalon' daffodils in September in there! That was embarrassing.



Interestingly, the basal plate on these still looked fairly healthy, which leads me to another thing I learned. Commercial growers propagate bulbs like daffodils where they can use mechanized planting and harvesting by cutting the bulbs into halves, then into fourths and, if the bulb is big enough, into 8ths and even 16ths. They then drench the bulbs in a fungicide to prevent rot and plant them. As long as each tiny piece of bulb has a part of the basal plate, the fraction of bulb should over time grow into a new bulb. Now I don't feel so bad if I accidentally pierce or cut a bulb while digging in the garden. So a few weeks ago, I planted those old 'Avalon' daffodils that were stored all those months in the cooler. I am hoping that some will survive and, while I don't expect any to bloom, maybe in coming years they will forgive me my poor care and thrive.



Well, as we say goodbye to the 2010 garden season (It's officially over as I got my first 2011 garden catalogue this week.) we had the usual lists of successes and failures. It was a tough year with the August, September and October drought, but I am sure we are all looking forward to next spring with all the enthusiasm and conviction of eternal optimists that this will be the year of our best garden ever!

Ruth Mougey, Highland House, Carrollton, KY



CALENDAR

KDABS Meeting: Saturday, January 15, 10:00 a.m.,
Douglass Hills City Hall, located at 219 Moser Road,
corner of Moser and Helmsdale, one block south of
Shelbyville Road.

KDABS/Hostas of Kentuckiana joint meeting:
Tuesday, March 15, 7:00 p.m., Republic Bank,
Springhurst.

Workshop--How to Show Daffodils: Saturday, March
19, 10:00 a.m., location to be determined

Show: April 2, 2011

REMINDER!

**Dues are due!
Please use the form below
for sending in your 2011 dues.**



Please feel free to visit our website:
www.kdabs.org

and also those of our wider groups:
www.daffodilusa.org
www.lilies.org
www.bulbsociety.com

Join the Kentucky Daffodil and Bulb Society!

Individual: \$ 10.00

Family: \$ 15.00

Make checks payable to KDABS

Send to: Jean Hynes

418 Whiteheath Rd.

Louisville, KY 40241-1747

Date

Paying dues for calendar year(s) _____

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone and/or Email address

Comments? Questions?