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AMERICAN DAFFODIL SOCIETY (ADS) 2019 GOLD MEDAL RECIPIENT ANNOUNCED!

Bloomington, MN – William Welch of Santa Cruz, CA was awarded the 2019 American Daffodil Society Gold Medal on May 3, 2019 at the American Daffodil Society Convention in Bloomington, MN.



The Gold Medal of the American Daffodil Society may be awarded once each year in recognition of creative work, of a preeminent nature, in the understanding and advancement of daffodils. The ADS Gold Medal for 2019 was awarded to William (*Bill the Bulb Baron*) Welch for his work promoting and developing tazetta daffodils. Bill fell in love with The Chinese Sacred Lily (*N. tazetta orientalis*) as a young boy and has spent his life devoted to breeding and promoting the tazetta hybrids and species.

He started off collecting all the tazettas that he could get his hands on, building up and maintaining one of the largest collections of these plants in the world. When he decided to start breeding tazettas he soon found that sterility was a major impediment to his goals. The tazettas have a different chromosome number than most of the standard cultivars and consequently plants like the poetaz were sterile. He overcame this by doubling the chromosome numbers of numerous sterile cultivars. Triploids were converted to fertile hexaploids and sterile diploids, into fertile tetraploids. Bill made a spectrum of tazettas that could be used for breeding. Among the results are to date sixty-three cultivars in Division 8 and five in Division 4 (doubles with one parent being a tazetta).



His work with tazettas is recognized around the world. In his climate the fertile tazettas set copious seed and Bill has been very generous sending seed to interested parties in other parts of the world. Several cultivars from his seed have been registered by others who flowered the resulting seedlings.

One of Bill's most famous registrants is his 'Autumn Colors Group' which features in the parentage of some sixteen cultivars. The 'Autumn Colors Group' and their progeny extend the flowering season from September through to December and beyond. Another one of the major

contributions of Bill to the Daffodil World, has been the generation of autumn cut-flower daffodils – no mean achievement.

Another achievement has been the creation of new autumn flowering double tazettas using the pollen of 'Golden Rain' to make 'Amazing Alexis' 4W-Y, and 'Erlicheer' to produce 'Rachel's Magic Spell' 4W-Y. He is the only person who has been able to use those two parents for breeding. Recently, he produced some other double tazettas that are very fertile and we expect to see many more doubles in the near future.

The American Daffodil Society has a tradition of honoring individuals who have contributed to the betterment of daffodils. Bill's Gold Medal is well deserved. He is more than merely a "*bulb baron*", he is the Tazetta King. Mr. Welch joins a prestigious group of individuals from around the world who continue their creative work towards the understanding and advancement of daffodils.