

VALE'S GREENHOUSE



Quality Plants For The Chinook Zone

301 - 3rd Street N.W., Black Diamond

933-4814

Perennial Plant Of The Year 2003

Leucanthemum "Becky"



Each year the Perennial Plant Association sends each member a ballot to select a Perennial Plant of the year. These plants do not tend to be new introductions to the garden world but plants that have been tried and proven worthy on nomination. After the selection, the plant is then promoted all across Canada and continental U.S.A. Here in the Black Diamond and Calgary area there have been years that the plant chosen has not be hardy to our Agricultural Zone of 2 or 3.

The saga of Leucanthemum "Becky" starts with Jim Stewart of Atlanta, Georgia. Jim and Becky received a Shasta daisy from their neighbour Mary Ann Gatlin who had obtained it from her mother Ida Mae. In the 1960s Ida Mae had spotted this daisy growing in a garden and offered to buy a clump. She quickly filled her trunk of her car with this new Shasta. Ida Mae has a successful nursery florist business and sold this Shasta daisy as a garden plant. In the mid 1980's this Leucanthemum still was not named or identified so in honour of Becky Stewart it was called "Becky". Perhaps the name should have been "Ida Mae".

Leucanthemum "Becky" is a wonderful choice to be grown as a specimen or in mass in the perennial border. This Shasta daisy will bloom large white flowers with beautiful deep yellow centres, starting in early July and will bloom till frost. It is valued for its excellent cut flowers and is good in the formal and informal garden. Its sturdy stems are wind resistant and will insure a good garden presence throughout season.

This old-fashioned favourite daisy grows best in full sun and well-drained soil. Root division in early summer easily propagates "Becky". Deadheading encourages rebloom and extends the flowering season into autumn. Stems can be cut back to lower foliage after flowering to tidy up the plant. Becky is a superior daisy due to its robust habit and performs well in zone 2 climate.

For more information on the Perennial Plant Association, and past Selections for the Perennial Plant of the Year, check their web site at www.perennialplant.org.

