

AIS Region 23 Newsletter New Mexico

Roswell Iris Show

2014



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Editor's Note

The views and information contained in the articles within this newsletter are solely those of the author, and are not necessarily endorsed by the Region 23 Executive Board. Reprinting of articles contained in this newsletter is permitted provided the source of publication, and the author, is given full credit.

Due to rising costs of printing and postage, the Region 23 American Iris Society Members approved the discontinuance of the newsletter in hard copy format, and have authorized the publication of the regional newsletter via electronic format. Society Presidents are encouraged to copy the newsletter to share with their members that do not utilize computers and/or internet services.

The Region 23 Newsletter will be posted to our Website at least once a year. I sincerely hope that you continue to enjoy the newsletter and all the information concerning the AIS members within our Region. All regional members are encouraged to submit news flashes (special kudos, get well wishes and memoriam information), photos, and articles to

me at: sdayres2@aol.com. Any comments on format or changes you would like to see implemented, please let me know as well. Since the document is electronic, it is easy to modify.

Regional Vice President Message, Howie Dash

Here in Las Cruces, winter has arrived. This year we finally had decent summer rains and we were rewarded by excellent rebloom. One of my seedlings that started blooming in mid-October is still trying to open its last bloom, despite an 18 degree morning earlier this week. Before you know it, spring with all its iris glory will be here.

I would like to thank Fran Day, Debra Bilberry, Helen Crotty and Reita Jordan for their service to the region. As the new kid on the block it is great to have a top notch team to follow. Fran and Debra will continue on in new positions - Fran as Secretary and Debra as Treasurer. I would also like to congratulate Steve Kelly as the new Assistant RVP and for receiving this year's Hybridizers Award. Finally, I would like to thank Scarlett Ayres for stepping in as the Newsletter Editor and also to Patricia Randall for her excellent work in this position in the past.

Thank you to the Santa Fe Iris Society for hosting the Regional Convention this past fall on September 28-29. Thank you also to Jim and Jean Morris of AIS for their informative programs and judges training. The members of the Santa Fe Iris Society showed exceptional hospitality. The Regional Conventions are our opportunity to get together with all our iris friends once a year and certainly worth everyone's attendance.

On July 2, AIS launched its new electronic newsletter, News & Notes. Every AIS member who has shared their current e-

mail address should have received the newsletter in their mailbox. This monthly publication will provide updates on what is happening in AIS and the Iris world in between Bulletin issues and alert our e-members when the Bulletin is available online. The scope is larger than what is practical for the Bulletin. We invite our members to report happenings of interest, photo essays, and announcements of significant events. In the future we will be able to survey our readers on various iris topics. We expect News & Notes to get better and more interesting as it develops. Because you can see its content quickly in the "in This Issue" block, you can easily go to those links that interest you most. Topics that were limited for space in the Bulletin can be expanded via News & Notes. We are eager for you to be an iris reporter and tell us on the PR-committee (robertpries@embarqmail.com, irismom@nc.rr.com, or wrmesser@gmail.com) about the things you would like included. If you did not receive your first issue, check with the membership secretary aismemsec@earthlink.net to see we have your current e-mail on file. If you decide you do not want this publication you can click on unsubscribe at any time. We hope this will become an interactive communication link with the members of the national AIS society. For those of you that are not members of AIS, please consider the \$25 a year to become a member. Besides the four issues of "Irises" that you

will receive, you will be supporting the AIS organization that is "everything" iris and promotes the continued evolution of our favorite flower.

On a more somber note, the finances of the Region have been declining for several years now. As RVP I hope to discuss with my fellow RVPs what other regions do to raise money. Also, if any of you have ideas how we can improve our treasury, please share them.



Figure 1 New Region 23 RVP Howie Dash

I have been RVP for a little over two months now. I look forward to my term and working with all of you. If you ever have any concerns or ideas, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Howie Dash

Club News

Albuquerque Aril and Iris Society (AAIS)

AAIS meets on the fourth Sundays of February, March, June, and September at the Albuquerque Garden Center, and has a Christmas party in December at a local restaurant. AAIS currently have around 26 paid-up members, about half of whom are active. They gained 9 new members this past year, and some of them have been very active.

AAIS held their usual two shows this year: one is an early show in late April especially for early bloomers such as Aril, Median, and Species iris, and the other is our traditional two-day Mother's Day weekend show at the Garden Center. Their sale is in July, also at the Garden Center. However, they had to find another venue for the early show, and it was held on an experimental basis at the Albuquerque Botanical Garden, a pleasant venue where the club was welcomed and encouraged to show for two days, but the building assigned proved to be too small to manage both the setup and the show in the available time on Saturday morning-as the judges learned. Although the weather was miserable, they had many more visitors than they do at the Garden Center, but we will probably not do two shows again, and may decide in September to hold April and May shows in alternate years at the Garden Center.

Despite some late frosts again this year, AAIS was able to put on the two shows with a respectable number of entries for both. Best of Show in April was *Speeding Again*, entered by Helen Radebaugh, who also took the Silver Medal. The Bronze Medal went to William (Dub) Philips. People's Choice was *Purple Pepper*, entered by Susan Davis. Best of Show in May was *Warbler*, an MTB introduced in 1935 by Williamson, and entered by Valerie White. Val also took the Silver, and Helen Crotty the Bronze. People's Choice was *Decadence* entered by Cindy Rivera. A club prize is awarded to the iris winning the highest number of votes by people visiting the show. This creates an opportunity to engage each visitor in a conversation about iris. The votes are usually spread over a number of varieties with a slim margin of victory.

This year they produce a brochure about the club and about the various classes of irises that extend the bloom season as well as some growing tips. Photos were contributed by Helen Radebaugh and the brochure was written by Helen Crotty. A friend who had been a professional brochure designer created the layout. They also distributed bookmarks designed by Patricia Randall that show meeting and sale dates. Brochures and bookmarks have been placed in the lobby of the Garden Center and were handed out at the May show and July sale.

AAIS other main activity has been planning for the Region 23 Convention. Many of the raffle and silent auction items came from the Barbara Figge estate sale. Barbara, who died about 12 years ago, was a long-time member of the New Mexico Iris Society, one of three Albuquerque clubs at the time. Some of the items were purchased at the estate sale, but unsold items were later donated by Debbie Owen, Barbara's daughter.

At last September meeting, new and continuing officers were elected to take office in January; Helen Crotty, President; Helen Radebaugh, Vice President; Patricia Randall, Secretary; Carolyn Spence, Treasurer; and Marge McMain, Assistant Treasurer. Both the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer have been sidelined by illness this year, and Helen Radebaugh is back to keeping the books in addition to the many other things she does.

Enchanted Vista Iris Society (EVIS)

The Enchanted Vista Iris Society had a fantastic year in 2014. An EVIS club member brings wine every meeting. They have door prizes and great food. They described themselves as the party club. Business meeting is small.

EVIS third Annual Iris Show was held on May 3, 2014 at Haynes Park Community Center in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. They had 11 exhibitors and 65 entries with 41 varieties/cultivars in the Horticulture Division, 7 exhibitors and 21 entries in the EVIS Sponsored Artistic Division. Plus they added a Photography Division for the first time with 18 entries. Judges James Riley, Steve Kelly, Ann Colwell, Philip Doonan, Pegi Naranjo, and Barbara Vance judged the Horticulture and Artistic Design entries. Since EVIS judges for the photography division were not able to come, they elected to use people's choice to determine the winner. Kathy Palmer was the winner of the Photography Division with her close up photo of "Taste of Magic". Eva Barry won Best Specimen of Show and Best of Section A: Tall Bearded with her entry *Christmas Present*. Steve Kelly won Best Seedling with *PBD 09-4*. There was a tie for Best of Section F: Historic Iris between Rae Phillips with *Superstition* and Cindy Rivera with *Minnesota Mixed Up Kid*. Rae Phillips won the Silver medal and Eva Barry won the Bronze medal. Deanna O'Donohoe won the Best Design of Show in the Novice Division and also the People's Choice Award with *Mai Tai Madness*; and Patricia Randall won Best Design of Show in the Advanced Division and she also won the People's Choice Award for *Lovely Leis*. The People's Choice Award for favorite iris went to Cindy Rivera for her tall bearded entry *Black Stallion*.

EVIS had regular meetings the second Sunday of the month at the Rio West Community Church from February through October. Some of the topics this year were Growing Louisiana Iris, Iris Introductions of 2012, and a wonderful presentation given by Patricia Randall for "The Iris-In Mythology, History, and Art". Patricia spent over a year researching her information for this program.

As a fairly new AIS affiliate, EVIS has not been in a position to hold a public iris sale yet. They have however, for the past 3 years held "Members Only Mini Iris Sales", purchasing iris from Mid-America and receiving additional donated rhizomes from some of our members. The Mini Sale is a means for their members to increase the number of named iris in their yards at a significant cost savings. EVIS plans to hold our First Annual Iris Sale in 2015.

EVIS membership had an almost 26% increase from 20 members in February, 2014 to 27 members in July 2014, with at least one additional individual interested in joining at the August meeting. Other new members are Kevin Konetzni, Sonja Lackey, John Lackey, Dolores Goedke, Nina Welch, William Barry, and Rae Phillips. As part of the business meeting each month, EVIS continues to have the "Iris Tip for the Month" at every meeting. The new members especially enjoy this to help them know what needs to be done and how to have successful and beautiful iris gardens. Patricia Randall has been the primary person sharing her vast knowledge and providing the tips. She has done a great job with this and everyone has benefitted!

EVIS members Philip Doonan, Patricia Randall, Kristin Ikenberg, Cathy Sherman, and Eva Barry attended the 2013 Region 23 convention in Santa Fe. Unfortunately none of the members were able to attend the AIS National Convention in Dallas this spring.

EVIS' Commemorative Iris Garden that was planted at the Rio Rancho Veteran's Park was spectacular for its first year bloom (see photos below). The iris have done so well that 2 of them already need to be dug and divided this year! All of the iris planted at the Veteran Park, have patriotic names (*Lest We Forget*, *Pledge of Allegiance*, *Patriotic Colors*, *Stars and Stripes Forever*, etc.) in honor of those serving in the military, as well as all the veterans of all US wars.



Figure 2 Patriotic themed Iris garden sponsored by EVIS at Rio Rancho Veteran's Park



Figure 3 EVIS Iris Bed at Rio Rancho Veteran's Park, Rio Rancho, New Mexico, 2014

Mesilla Valley Iris Society (MVIS)

MVIS meets the third Sunday of each month in a member's home at 2:00 p.m. except for (June and July). Guests are always welcome. In the past few months MVIS have added several new members. The club voted to give new members a potted iris, pay half of a member's first polo shirt with the club logo and provide a name tag. The membership committee is sending out welcome emails as well as the president. Most meetings include a program with speaker. Each meeting has an Elouise Corner. Elouise Young is one of our life members and specializes in growing rebloomers. During Elouise Corner she shares her knowledge of iris and responds to any questions the group may have about hybridizing, planting and growing iris. The club has decided to delegate its routine business decisions to its executive board and thereby allows us to structure our meetings to keep business at a minimum and optimize iris discussions.

Important purchases include rolling carts to allow us to transport potted plants into and out of the mall, and a TV for showing presentations at Senior Expo, iris show and rhizome sale. Thanks to Dale Ellis, the club also acquired about 1000 plastic pots and plastic garden trays free that can be used at the show and sale from a nursery that was going out of business. About 200 potted irises were sold at the spring show which pays for renting the tables for the show at the Mesilla Valley Mall.

Wes Wilson purchased a semi-truck load of pecan shells for \$300. Club members can purchase the pecan shells for 50¢ a 5-gallon bucket. Pecan shells make great mulch. Initially, while there is still meat inside, they attract much kitty food on the wing. However, not to worry, the large number of birds can detect an approaching hungry cat. The club's highlights are:

January – MVIS now has a logo and has purchased T-shirts and hats with the logo. Club members at first designed a logo with the Organ Mountains as a back drop but Hoop-T-Dudes would have charged \$40 for setup. If we used their pictures of an iris and a mountain then there would be no setup cost. The club pays for half the price of one T-shirt. Program was soil nutrients by master gardener Jeff Anderson. He extolled the virtues of using cotton seed waste and alpha pellets for compost. Adding alfalfa pellets to the cotton waste will generate enough heat to cook the seeds. Las Crucians can acquire the cotton waste for free but the semi-truck for its delivery is not. The cost for the truck is \$200. Refer to the following link for more information on cotton waste.

http://etd.auburn.edu/bitstream/handle/10415/38/JACKSON_BRIAN_25.pdf?sequence=1

February – The program was Native Plants by Tim McKimmie. Following a suggestion of Howie Dash the previous fall, the club voted to pay \$200.00 for shipping and a phytosanitary certificate to import iris from Australian hybridizer, Barry Blyth. This order totaled over \$2000.00. The irises arrived in February 2014. The extra rhizomes were given to the club to sell to offset the \$200.00 dollar expenditure. This sale was accomplished by auction to all club members (the proceeds more than paid for the \$200.00

expenditure). This purchase brought many new varieties of iris to the Mesilla Valley iris gardens and eventually will be offered at our sale and benefit the community.

March – Scarlett Ayres gave the programs for Grooming Irises for the Show and Show Rules. Eloise corner talked about how hybridizers and gardeners view irises. MVIS had a table at the 2014 SW Senior Expo at the Las Cruces Convention Center. This event provided an opportunity to advertise the MVIS show. The club purchased a monitor and displayed a slideshow of MVIS and irises. It generated lots of interest.

April – 41st Annual MVIS Iris Show was Saturday, April 19. This year the show was presented in honor of our MVIS life members. Currently, MVIS have 6 life members with one surviving founding member. One new member joined at this event. The club made vases of show flowers after the show and several of the members took the bouquets to assisted living facilities. The club received community recognition for these bouquet donations. There were 120 entries for the Iris show with 91 varieties. Howie Dash won the sweepstakes award and Lily Rawlyk won runner up. MVIS has a People's Choice award. This is the award the public votes for their favorite. It was a 3-way tie.

- Best in show - *Drama Queen* presented by Cynthia Wilson
- Best Arilbred - *Elmohr* presented by Howard Dash
- Runner up Tall Bearded - *La Scala* presented by Howard Dash
- Best seedling - *ADG 11-02-12* by Howard Dash
- Best Species and show runner up - *Iris tectorum* presented by Eileen Kuhre
- Best Space - *Glitter Gulch* presented by Scarlett Ayres
- People's Choice - 3 way tie between Eileen Kuhre, Lily Rawlyk and Cynthia Wilson

On April 26, Club members volunteered to help with a Parkinson's Support Group fundraiser at the Wilson's home. Handouts were made for persons interested in growing iris or becoming a member of the club. The MVIS monitor slideshow was viewed with interest. This event was MVIS community outreach programs. On April 27, the club toured two of the gardens of its members, Eloise Young and Scarlett Ayres. The garden tours are a highlight of the club and is their time to slow down and enjoy the blooms. Lunch was provided at Scarlett's.

May – Wes and Cynthia Wilson's iris garden, Iris Inspire Us was one of the gardens on the Las Cruces Tour of Gardens on May 3rd. This event is open to public and is organized by the Desert Growers



Garden Club. Hundreds travel from garden to garden. Club members helped prepare the garden, and served as guides, providing information about iris horticulture and the MVIS. One new member came from this outreach. Presentations were designed that contained information on growing irises and the club. Despite occurring late in the iris season, many irises were still in bloom for the tour. Many people commented that it was their favorite garden on the tour. On May 10 the club had a mini dig hosted at Wes and Cynthia's house. Elouise gave the club a large donation of TB rebloomers which were

potted to sell in the fall at the rhizome sale. Twelve members attended, three were our newest members.

During the May meeting, the club selected Mid-America Garden to fulfill the club's annual order of irises for club members in good standing. The club agreed that \$500.00 could be spent on club irises. Club irises are distributed by lot at the August meeting to members (sitters) who have had a high activity level in the club. High level of activity in the club is defined as; attending 3 meetings and perform an approved service function to the club. Accepted service components include serving as host or co-host, serving as an officer, or on a standing committee, serving in a designated roll at the Iris Show or participating in the Big Dig and the Rhizome sale, or any other club activity sanctioned by the board. The complete procedures are written in the MVIS Club Iris Procedures and are part of the President's Handbook that is being written. One person joined the MVIS at the May meeting. May's program was Healthy Gardening Techniques: Posture and Body Mechanics by Lily Rawlyk.

August – Mid America delivered over 51 irises to the club for the \$500 sent earlier in the year. These irises are given to the sitters. The August program was Composting by Wes Wilson. All able club members got together for the Big Dig hosted by Ann and Chuck Colwell over Labor Day weekend.

September – The first weekend after Labor Day weekend is MVIS annual Iris Sale at the Mesilla Valley Mall. Club members also brought back the increases of the irises they have been growing that were purchased in 2012 from Kerr and distributed them to the entire club during the meeting on the 21st.



Figure 4 MVIS sale workers left: Dale and Norma, right: Cynthia, Norma, Jim, Dale, Frankie, Roger and Howie



Figure 5 Left: a poem about the MVIS written by Wes Wilson, Right: Dale places the left-over irises from the sale into his truck. The irises are saran-wrapped for security. The rolling carts are used to transport the potted irises into the mall at the beginning of the sale..

December – MVIS has the holiday party and pot luck dinner. Members bring a gift worth \$10 or less for the secret Santa. A gift can be stolen twice before it officially belongs to someone.



Figure 6 From left to right Bob, Jackue and Ann sit back and digest Christmas dinner.

Pecos Valley Iris Society (PVIS)

PVIS says they have one meeting every year where everyone tells them how they individually grow irises. They have a rhizome sale every other year. In October, PVIS held a question and answer program on anything people wanted to know about growing Irises. The meeting was held at the Cedar room at the Eastern New Mexico Medical Center. This was especially helpful for the newer members. November meeting was held at the home of Isabel Olsen and was followed by a walk through her large rock garden which was filled with many beautiful and some very unusual plants. December found PVIS club members at Peppers Bar and Grill for their Christmas dinner. They took non-perishable food for distribution to the needy. February's meeting was held at Olsen's husband's law office conference room. Club member Phelps White presented "The History of Livestock in the Southwest". He explained how the Spaniards brought over animals and traded them to the Indians for food and other things and then when they left they left the animals behind. The Indians started making the famous wool blankets. Today, New Mexico wool is in high demand throughout the world and brings the highest price at the market.

In March the program was given by club member Georgia Shoenecker, who is a retired flower show judge. Her program was on "The Mechanics of Design". She showed them how to place material for

the best effect in a design and some of the material to use to hold the flowers and plant material in place. They learned a lot from her and just in time for the April show. In April, Pegi Naranjo gave a most informative presentation on "How to Groom and Show an Iris". Pegi is not only an AIS judge, she is also a national flower show judge so they had someone who knows what the judges are looking for on the show bench. In May, PVIS went to the Hondo Iris Farm in Hondo, NM during their peak bloom season. PVIS member Mary Herrington showed those attending how to hybridize an Iris. The Iris farm horticulture expert did not know how to hybridize and was very interested in trying to develop seedlings. After the iris farm visit, the club stopped at Pegi's home in San Patricio and had a short business meeting. The awards were given out for the Iris flower show. They had refreshments and had time to look around Pegi's beautiful property.

In September, PVIS had a very talented metal artist and current member, Jimmy Hickman showed them how he makes some of his metal flowers and other art work.

The PVIS Iris flower show was held on April 26th. It was considered to be one of the most beautiful they ever had. The artistic design division was gorgeous with over 26 designs.

- Best Specimen won by Renate Reisel
- Runner up Pegi Naranjo
- Silver Medal won by Pegi Naranjo
- Bronze Medal won by Georgia Schoenedker
- Best Seedling won by Steve Kelly

The Artistic Design Winners were:

- Best Design won by Pegi Naranjo
- Runner up won by Rene McCoy
- Sweepstakes won by Pegi Naranjo
- In the Novice class, Corina White won 1st place in all of the three classes she entered.

Roswell is well known for their beautiful iris arrangements at their shows. An exhibitor considers the contours of the dish and the pieces that were chosen. Then the exhibitor decides on the shape and structure that would best accentuate the beauty of these forms and the irises which are central to the display in an iris show. The shapes can be horizontal, vertical, S-shaped, crescent-shaped, oval, triangular, and essentially any appealing shape. Points of focus are often added to draw the eye. The following pictures show examples of some of PVIS exhibitor's creativity. As you can see, a successful arranger often thinks beyond the traditional vase to develop unique arrangements.



Figure 7 a-d Some of the 26 flower arrangements show at PVIS 2014 show.



Figure 8 Arrangements can include greenery from other plants as well as natural materiel like driftwood.



Figure 9 Arrangements often include a background to help set the mood for the arrangement



Figure 10 The tall-bearded iris Night of Gladness won Best in Show, exhibited by Renate Reisel.



Figure 11 Roswell 2014 Iris show

Santa Fe Iris Society (SFIS)

At the beginning of the year there were 39 members in the Santa Fe Iris Society. Regular meets start in September and then restart in February through August, the last Sunday of the month from 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM at the Kingston Residence just off Rodeo Road in Santa Fe, N.M. This year 16 new members joined throughout the year. Many members joined at an H&G show.

SFIS started the year out hosting the AIS Region 23 Convention on September 28 and 29 in Santa Fe at the Santa Fe Posse Shack. Guest speakers were Jim and Jean Morris. Jim and Jean also held judges training on Medians on Sunday morning September 29th. They scheduled talks on Plants of the Southwest - Native Plants, by Gail Haggard and Pest Management by Patrick Torres, Santa Fe County Extension Agent. We had other interesting programs throughout the year:

- "Getting Your Garden Ready for the Season" by Malcolm Newman owner of Newman's Nursey.
- "Rebloomers" by Marilyn Bennett
- "Native Pollinators in New Mexico" by Linda Weiner (The Bug Lady)
- "Instruction on filling out iris entry tags and tips on grooming your stalks/blooms for the Iris Show" by Marilyn Bennett.
- Judge's Training "Awards and Honors" Patricia Randall.
- Visited the "Herb Grand and the National Earth-Kind Rose Field Trial Project" at the Santa Fe County Fair Grounds - talks given by Santa Fe Master Gardeners.

May 2 - had a table at the Master Gardeners Garden Fair. Club members demonstrated how to divide and plant irises. They gave out handouts to help gardeners with dividing and planting irises. Several new members joined the Santa Fe Iris Society at the Garden Fair. One of their members Larry Tomczak was interviewed by KSFR during the Garden Fair.

SFIS Iris Show at the Devargas Mall on May 24. The Santa Fe area had a dry winter/spring once again with very late freezes the first part of May. This has been the case for the last two years. They had 41 entries displayed by 9 exhibitors for the Horticulture Division. The Queen of Show was *Iris Setosa*, a SPEC iris shown by Francis Garcia. The Silver Medalist were Monty and Debra Bilberry and Bronze Medalist was Patricia Feather. Because of the odd weather (hot then cold then hot again) the club were able to show a variety of the different types: SDB, MTB, 18, BB, TB and SPEC irises in the Horticulture Division. The Artistic Division had 8 exhibitors. Best Design of Show and Sweepstakes for Artistic Design was Patricia Copple. Pictures of the arrangements are shown below. They found panels of iris judges and artistic judges from around the state and Master Judge Debra Strauss from Midland, Texas.

The Saturday before the iris show Barb Mann was on KSFR radio to talk about irises and the upcoming Iris Show. We also had drawings for \$20.00 gift certificates to the Santa Fe Iris Sale held on August 2.

Pat Feather was in charge of their acquisition program. To be part of the acquisition program a member must be active for one year before they can join the program. To stay qualified the member must go to two club meetings, help weed and tend the club garden and help at the Iris Show and/or Sale.

The club buys new introduction irises for the acquisition program. Acquisition program members divide the new iris rhizomes between the acquisition program members, then they grow the acquisitions (introductions) for 2 years and then divide them. The grower keeps one and the rest of the rhizomes goes to the Iris Rhizome Sale in August. These are auctioned off or put on the sale tables (at ½ the original price). This is a great way for members to get new iris rhizomes to grow in their gardens.

The annual rhizome sale was August 2 on a Saturday. They had very good crowds and gained 8 new members at the sale. One of SFIS members, Katie Rossi-Rooney was interviewed live on the local radio station KFSR on Saturday right before the sale. This helped remind folks to come.

August 31 will be their last meeting for the 2013-2014 meeting year. Elections and installation of officers for 2014-2015 year occur at this meeting. This meeting was their annual potluck picnic. It was held at Kathie Rossi-Rooney's residence.

The Santa Fe Iris Garden did very well this year. It had very nice blooms, when many club members were caught by the freezes at the first of May and had no blooms at all.

Janet Hirons, Master Gardener in Santa Fe, asked the club to help find historic Irises for the Bandelier Garden at El Zagon in Santa Fe. Janet was looking for irises that could have been planted by Mrs. Johnson one of the owners of the El Zagon, James L Johnson House & Garden located at 545 Canyon Road, Santa Fe, NM. Barb Mann and Pat Feather were instrumental in finding irises for the period around 1930.



Figure 12 Night at the Opera



Figure 13 Unusual containers make for unique arrangements.



Figure 14 Arrangement can be full consisting of many flowers or just a few.



Figure 15 Flower arrangements can be small as well as large.



Figure 16 Queen's table

Region 23 News

2014 Regional Convention-Albuquerque

A great Region 23 convention was held at Albuquerque during a warm August weekend. AAIS sent 7, EVIS sent 9, MVIS sent 7, PVIS sent 2 and SFIS sent 9 people to attend the convention. Two persons, Riley and Shirley Probst were from out of town. The programs were “Rebloomers” by Riley Probst who is president of the Reblooming Iris Society and “Arils and Arilbreds” by Pete McGrath who is a local hybridizer. All that attended seemed to have a great time, with meeting old and soon-to- be new friends. There was good food, a lot of visiting, irises, raffles, an auction, education about irises and just a nice around time.

The convention discussed putting Kincade markers website on our website. Debra Bilberry stated that we can put a link on the website; there is a code that goes with the region. A buyer will 50¢ off the regular price and the region gets 50¢. A check is sent to the region by the company.

Riley said his region gives an award for the person who has the most hours of judging training in the year. Pat encourages everyone to consider who should be nominated for the service award and fill out the paperwork to nominate them.

Pegi had a great idea for the basket for the national silent auction. She suggested putting Arils in the gift basket. Pegi accepted the responsibility for creating the basket. It was a huge success. It brought the second highest bid at the national convention at Portland Oregon.



Figure 17 Iris basket and list of donated Arilbred irises at the national convention

Pete McGrath briefing on Arils and Arilbreds began by discussing how he became interested in Arils at a show. The first iris he saw was Oyez. He is still enchanted to this day with its veining and breeds for veining unlike Howard Shockey which was aiming for clear irises. Some of the species iris can be easy to kill. The Mid-East is the area where arils originated. The climate is bone dry in the summer while the desert southwest have a monsoon season in the summer. If Arils receive water when it is hot, they will rot. His other interests include Daylily hybridization, clematis and Japanese maples. He had problems with Curved Bill Thrashes who kept pulling out the pure Arils he was going to introduce. They like to eat beetles and obtain extra moisture from roots. They did this for 2 weeks and eventually killed the Arils. So now the Curved Bill Thrashes die of lead poisoning in his yard. He cautioned about over-fertilization of Arils. You might get lush growth and lots of bloom but it will then rot. Pete stated that Colchicine, a poison and possible carcinogenic, was used on Arils in the past. This focused the iris to have cancer and those Arils that lived have lots more genes. It has been known to create fertile hybrids where before the hybrids were sterile. The effects are unpredictable and cause a lot of Arils to have bad form. Colchicine works by disrupting cell plate formation during cellular division, so that as a plant cell divides into two cells, it does not finish the division. This produces a single cell with a doubled nucleus having twice the chromosome number. The new plant is known as a polyploid and is often a common natural occurrence resulting from accidents in cell division. About half of all flowering plants have had origins in polyploidy.

Pete uses tomato bloom set or 2-4-D to set blooms on Oyez. He puts it in suspension with ethanol and make a weak solution with water and spray on the flower. This will help with setting in bloom. You can buy it in Texas but you need a license in NM. It may make blooms deformed for a few years. With wild iris, a given clone cannot self-propagate, but different clumps can pollinate. They start growing and it is safe to water when the night time temperature is in the 50's. Heavy clay soil should not be watered in the summer.



Figure 18 Pete McGrath gave a presentation on Arilbreds at the regional convention

Riley Probst gave a presentation on "Reblooming Irises". Riley is the president of the reblooming iris society. He is a former AIS board member. He is a member of 6 California iris clubs. You can't reach him on Friday night since he always goes to iris meetings. He recommends Month Byers or Ben Hagar as hybridizers of reblooming irises that will rebloom everywhere. Both have passed on. He recommends planting rebloomers in one bed so it is easy to water and dividing in the fall but leave half in the ground. Dividing rebloomers will prevent most from reblooming. Rebloomers like virgin soil. Amend with anything. One convention member said a friend used 10 10 10 fertilizer and things stopped growing. He had it analyzed and was told the soil was poisoned after 50 years of fertilization.

He used carpet in between the rows to provide mud free places on which to walk. He puts socks on buds on cold nights between 28-32°F to protect the buds in the fall. Repeat rebloom are those that bloom early summer.



Figure 19 Carpet is put in between rows to prevent weeds

He advised everyone to report the rebloom to Reblooming Iris Society.

Rebloomers need:

- Genes which allow them to rebloom (this is complex)
- Summer moisture
 - Drip irrigation
 - berms
- Sunshine (almost full sun)
- Fertilizer spring and late August or September. He uses 6-20-10 fertilizers.
- Plenty of water but not enough to rot

Sass brothers in the 30's and 40's noticed that irises rebloomed in their fields. In the 50's a group of iris lovers formed a group then in the 60's finally formed a club. Bernice, Zurbrigg, and Smith in the 60's started the Reblooming Iris Society. At first there were only IBs and TBs'. John Wiler from Fresno worked on reblooming SDBs and became president in the 80's. Ben Hagar in Stockton CA took an interest in reblooming irises. Hagar put out 1-2 year. Monty Byers in Clear Lake, CA also became interested in RE. He was putting out a dozen each year. Unfortunately he died too young. This was a shame because his rebloomers are reliable throughout the country. In the 90's and 2000's, Innerst, Aitken, Joan Roberts introduced rebloomers. Don and Ginny Spoon in western VA are taken west coast rebloomers and crossing with east coast rebloomers to develop rebloomers that will rebloom throughout the country. Mid-America introduces one a year. Some of the big hybridizers are getting on the band wagon since the public is asking for rebloomers. When Loyd Zurbrigg introduced Immortality

he introduced it for \$100 a rhizome and as an ever-bloomer. If Sutton continues with his reblooming program now that he has moved from CA to ID he should create a rebloomer that blooms everywhere. Fred Kerr has been accidentally creating rebloomers. Larry Lauer from Oregon also has been introducing rebloomers. Most of his introductions are either rebloomers or have reblooming heritages.

The evolution of rebloomers has been driven by backyard hybridizers. However, now the big boys are getting involved. The big boys do not like rebloomers because they can't sell a rhizome if it has a rebloom stalk coming up. They have to throw it away. Plus, it may bloom in their nurseries but won't bloom in other parts of the country. People have known to chew them out because an advertised rebloomer didn't rebloom in their garden.

The second period of rebloom should at least be as long as the first period. This is not a problem with the cool weather in the fall. It may be a problem in the hot summer. You should double your days. A growing season may be from March to February. If it blooms 14 days in the spring, it should bloom 14 days in the summer, fall or February. It shouldn't just rebloom once and never rebloom in subsequent years. It starts at the beginning of the blooming season which for NM is March. Rebloomers are usually the earliest blooming because they like cool evenings. It is hard to rebloom with warm summer nights.

If a rebloomer reblooms for 22 days, Riley Probst considers it an excellent rebloomer. He would like to see in the judge's handbook that there be a place on the tag to note if it is rebloomer seedling. This might make the seedling distinctive. It doesn't matter for named varieties because the judge is judging how the iris looks at that particular moment. Riley thanks you should put RE next to the seedling number.



Figure 20 Riley Probst, Cindy Rivera and Howie Dash at the regional convention.

Region 23 Awards

Phil Doonan won the AIS Region 23 Distinguished Service Award. Congratulations Phil.



Figure 21 Phil Doonan is presented the Distinguished Service Award by Pat Randall

Articles

Idea for Iris cleaning station

By Scarlett Ayres

One week before the Mesilla Valley Iris Society annual rhizome sale, club members come together over Labor Day weekend at Ann Colwell's house in Las Cruces, NM to clean the irises they have dug out of their own gardens and mark them with name, price, type and year introduced. Cleaning over 1500 irises for the sale is a lot of work but many hands make light work. Previously, members would place the rhizomes on a large screen and spray them with water. They would then transfer the irises to a large bucket where they would be scrubbed before being transferred to bleach water. This led to muddy feet and sore backs and shoulders from bending over the buckets for hours. MVIS newsletter editor, Wes Wilson, created a cleaning station that made cleaning irises much easier.



Figure 22 Dale Ellis, Lily Rawlyk and Howie Dash clean rhizomes at the iris cleaning station.

The new method developed by Wes involved using reclaimed sinks (one dual sink and one single sink), lumber, PVC pipes, garden hoses, spray wands and saw horses to create a cleaning station of 3 sinks that would drain into nearby bushes so feet are kept nice and dry. A garden hose is hooked up to the

contraption so that each sink has its own spray hose. The whole setup is placed on some sawhorses and can be transported easily by two people and a truck.



Figure 23 A hose hooked up to pipes provide water for three cleaning wands. Reclaimed lumber and sinks kept the price low.

The setup is not pretty but it is functional. It will never be featured on HGTV. The whole contraption is meant to be disassembled and stored away for future use. Most everything except the PVC pipes, spray wands and some of the hoses are reclaimed, so the cost of the system is minimal. Most people thought this setup was much easier on the back and the sneakers. Though, the dual sink proved to be a little too

close for comfort. The couple that worked at the dual sink ended up spraying each other quite a bit. However, the temperature was in the high 90's so they probably didn't mind too much.



Figure 24 A pipe drains water away from the sinks into nearby bushes keeping sneakers dry.

And the Dykes Medal winner is...

By Scarlett Ayres

The 2014 American Iris Society winner of the Super Bowl of the iris world is a Miniature Tall Bearded iris called Dividing Line. The Dykes Medal winner is awarded nearly every year to an iris that has won best in its class in the past three years. First awarded in 1927, the Dykes Medal is the most prestigious award of the AIS and is awarded to no more than one iris per year. It honors William R. Dykes (1877-1925), an English botanist and author of *The Genus Iris*. The road to the Dykes medal is long as the iris has to first win Honorable Mention, then Award of Medal. It has another three years to win the top medal in its class. It takes a minimum of seven years for an iris to get to the top if it wins every award along the way on its first year of eligibility. In this case, Dividing Line won tops in its class by winning the Williamson-White Medal in 2011 making it eligible to win the Dykes for the next 3 years. This was the last year it

was eligible for the Dykes. Many iris lovers have a Dykes garden because they find it interesting to see how irises have changed throughout the years.

The Dykes Memorial Medal winners list reads like a story about the revolution caused by the inclusion of the tetraploids (4 sets of chromosomes) into hybridizing programs. Most of the original hybridizers did not know about genetics. They just followed their intuition and used a great deal of luck. The story of the Dykes is a story about the development of pure whites, pinks and tall yellows. It's a story about the quest for the blackest black, a true rose red, ruffles and unusual patterns. Finally it is a story about developing a hardy plant that can be grown throughout the country.

Each year AIS accredited judges vote for a variety of awards for irises. There are a total of around 500 for the nation. Judges are iris lovers who train every year on how to judge the 15 classes of medals. The most important medal is the Dykes medal. Judges are expected to grow the irises eligible for the Dykes medal so they can vote the best iris. Since tall bearded irises have been the most popular, they have dominated this award. However, this year Dividing Line won this most coveted of American Iris Society's awards. MTB's don't usually grow well in all parts of the country including many areas of New Mexico. Dividing Line is an exception. It has grown very well in New Mexico gardens from Las Cruces to Santa Fe. MTB's are often called a table iris and is used for cut flower arrangements. Smaller and more delicate than the tall bearded iris, MTB's often look like a swarm of butterflies.

Dividing Line is certainly a beautiful iris and is very distinctive with that line down the middle of the lower petals. Would you be surprised to learn that color only accounts for 5 out of 100 points awarded by the judges? Branching, bud count, fragrance, distinctiveness are awarded points by the judges.

The award is not without controversy. Many believe that Dykes selection is favored for California and Oregon hybridizers. The largest iris nurseries and the most iris judges are concentrated on the west coast. Also, it clearly is very difficult for any iris not in the Tall Bearded class to have a chance of winning. Only in 1981 and 2008 and this year with Dividing Line has an iris that is not a Tall Bearded Iris won the Dykes.

Annual Meeting Host Rotation Schedule

2015 Mesilla Valley Iris Society, Las Cruces

2016 Enchanted Vista Iris Society, Rio Rancho

2017 Pecos Valley Iris Society, Roswell

2018 Santa Fe Iris Society, Santa Fe

2019 Albuquerque Aril & Iris Society, Albuquerque

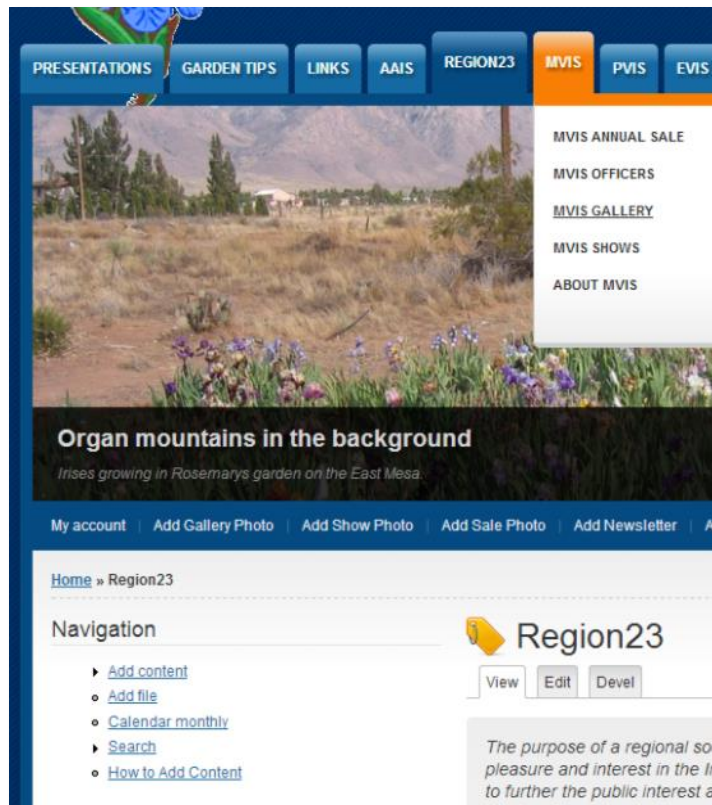
Website News

All five clubs have pages on the web site. Everyone can view the web site without logging in. Logging in allows you to add content to the website. Once you login, you see a link on the left under Navigation "How to add Content". This links to a page that has videos and articles on how to add photos, articles, presentations, events to the calendars, how to use the google drive, and how to modify club pages. All clubs have two types of users. The photo editors can add pictures to the website. Any club member can be a photo editor for their club. A common userid and password was created for each club. Contact your club president for the userid and password. The other type of editor is the club editor. The club

editor has lots more permission and can change the club pages, add presentations, events and articles and modify the calendar. A bug was fixed on the web site. The bug would not allow users to use the web-site editor. It has been fixed now people with the appropriate authentication can now edit.

To go to your club on the website, go to www.aisregion23.com. The clubs tabs are at the tops (AAIS, EVIS, MVIS, SFIS, PVIS). Hover over your club and you will see submenus for Sale, Gallery, Officers and Shows. These submenus are apparently not available to the iPhone.

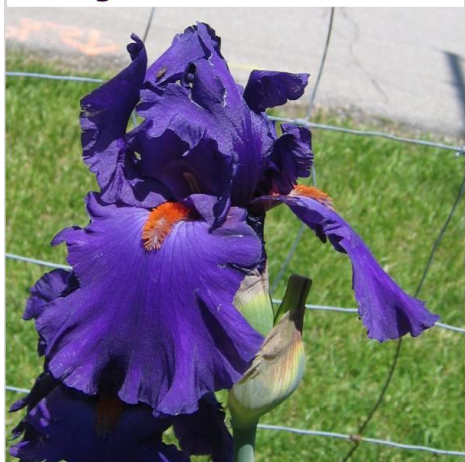
MVIS uses their MVIS Annual Sale sub menu to provide a link to the cloud where the iris sale pictures reside. Each year, the link shows pictures for the irises that are



available for sale that year. This allows users to shop and make a list.

Geek Corner

**Paul Black, TB
T. Johnson, 2003
AM'07, Wister '09,
Dykes Medal '10**



Though you can upload pictures to the web site, it may take a while if you have beaucoup amount of pictures. Another method is to put the pictures on the cloud and provide a link that lets people view the pictures. MVIS uses Google cloud to store their pictures used for the iris sale. A link to all 800+ pictures as well a link to this year's sale pictures is provided on the MVIS Annual Rhizome sale page. A Google drive is set up on the picture editor's computer. It acts like another computer drive. Any picture copied to the google drive on the computer is automatically uploaded to the Google cloud. You don't have to do anything else. The editor then creates a link to the appropriate folder. The link is pasted on the web page using the link button in the editor (looks like a chain link). The picture at left is indicative of the club sale pictures. PowerPoint is used to create these pictures for the MVIS sale. Each slide consists of text (word art), a 4x6 box shape and the picture. The text and picture fit inside the box. Select all three (text, picture and box) so that all 3 are chosen. Right click and

choose *Save as Picture*. Change file type from PNG to JPEG. Rename picture and save.

Region 23 Regional Officers and Club Directors

RVP (executive): Howie Dash howiedash@aol.com

Immediate Past RVP: Fran Days chatmaison@comcast.net

Assistant RVP: Steve Kelly puffincc@msn.com

Secretary: Fran Days chatmaison@comcast.net

Treasurer: Debra Bilberry dbilberry@gmail.com

Membership Chair:

Webmaster: Scarlett Ayres sdayres2@aol.com

Newsletter Editor: Scarlett Ayres sdayres2@aol.com

Local Iris Club Directors:

Albuquerque Aril and Iris Society: Steve Speights smspeights@q.com

Enchanted Vista Iris Society: Rose McClain Rocky Ford

Mesilla Valley Iris Society: Cynthia Wes wes-wilson@comcast.net

Pecos Valley Iris Society:

Santa Fe Iris Society:

American Iris Society News

Future AIS Conventions Locations: The 2016 AIS National Convention will be in Newark NJ May 23-28. The 2017 AIS National Convention will be in Des Moines IA.

Judges Report by Patricia Randall Judge's Training Chairman

The Region currently have 16 American Iris Society certified judges, of which 12 are Garden/Exhibition Judges, 3 Master Judges, and 1 Emeritus Judge. Long time members Maxine Perkins and Dr. Scott Jordan are registered as Retired Master Judges after many years of judging services to our region as well as many surrounding states. I am sort to report we lost our 1 Apprentice Judge due to their lapse in renewing their AIS dues.

From the annual reports, many of you have been attending various judge's training where and when offered. Many of you have also visited numerous gardens around the country while attending Regional or Nation Conventions, or even while on vacation to other parts of the country.

Several of our judges travel throughout our region in the springtime lending their judging expertise to judge our annual iris shows.

We also have 4 other AIS members who have declared their desire to become a judge. Some of them have just begun the chore of attending training sessions to acquire their judge's certification, while others have already attended several training sessions and are hard at work on accumulating the required hours to become a Garden/Exhibition Judge. Way to go guys!

Within the next two weeks I will be compiling all the information and data contained within your annual judge's activity reports and will fill out the required documentation for Judy's report. Her report is presented at the AIS Fall Meeting for your approval.

I thank each and every one of you for your dedication and support to the American Iris Society and especially to our region as our judges.

Region 23 Judges			
G/E Debra Bilbery	Life	G/E Ken Fladager	12/31/16
G/E Ann Colwell	12/31/14	G/E Betty Ann Gunther	01/31/15

G/E Helen Crotty	01/31/17	G/E Steve Kelly	09/30/14
G/E Howie Dash	12/31/14	M Pegi Naranjo	12/31/16
G/E Frances Day	05/31/17	E Patricia Randal	12/31/16
G/E Henry Day	05/31/17	G/E James Reilly	12/31/16
M Phil Doonan	Life	G/E Cindy H. Rivera	07/01/15
G/E Patricia J. Feather	12/31/16	M Mrs. Walter White	12/31/16

The above listed Judges with a green AIS dues expiration date are all good to go! If your expiration date is highlighted in red, your dues are coming up for renewal --- please watch those dates!

There is nothing

Does inspire us

Like the beauty

Of an iris