

# AIS Region 23 Newsletter New Mexico

Howie Dash preparing the seedling bed at the Farm and Ranch Museum,  
July 2019



2019

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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, Scarlett Ayres

This year has seen a lot of hard work by members from all the clubs in New Mexico as we prepare for Las Cruces to host the American Iris Society National Convention in 2021. I am excited that this year's convention is coming after planting the convention irises around Las Cruces. This is the first time New Mexico has hosted the AIS National Convention. It will be the 101st AIS anniversary. The second century of the AIS starts here in New Mexico! I am sure that with all the talented people belonging to this region it will be a smashing success. Thanks to everyone, especially those out-of-towners who contributed their time to plant these irises in Las Cruces. We have nearly 700 cultivars from all over the country. We have received, MTBs, SDBs, TBs, IBs, BBs and LAs.

Speaking of hybridizing, NM hybridizers are working in TBs, ABs and oddly enough LAs. Howie Dash won best seedling in the 2017 National Convention in Des Moines, Iowa. I hope to see many of Region 23 hybridizer's efforts in 2021 at the national convention in Las Cruces.

Thanks to all who sent in their AIS Symposium Ballots. The Iris Spice Trader was number one in New Mexico and Stairway to Heaven number two.

Looking ahead the American Iris Society will be celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2020. It will be an exciting time and the 2020 National Convention will again be back east in Newark, NJ. AIS is planning an anniversary book and other events to celebrate. They want people to write articles about their clubs for inclusion into the anniversary book. The deadline is September/October. MVIS and AAIS is planning on doing an article about their respective clubs. All articles can be sent to Jim Morris, [morrisje1@aol.com](mailto:morrisje1@aol.com). Jim says we can talk about charter members, well known hybridizers, brief history, and he wants quality pictures. There is not a set structure. Of course, AIS is encouraging voluntary monetary contributions, both from Affiliate Clubs and individuals. Should you wish to contribute you can make checks out to "AIS Foundation," c/o Jill Bonino, 3110 Kirkham Drive, Glendale, CA 91206.

## Club News

### Albuquerque Aril and Iris Society (AAIS)

The

Albuquerque Aril and Iris Society meets at the Albuquerque Garden Center for four regular meetings in February, March, June, and September annually. Our shows and rhizome sales are also held at the Garden Center, and we have a fifth meeting at a member's home in April on how to prepare iris entries for the show and a December holiday luncheon party and white elephant gift exchange at a local restaurant. Our September meeting is our Rhizome Raffle, where a club order, recently from Superstition Gardens, is raffled off for \$5 a ticket, with every ticket holder guaranteed a potted recently-introduced iris. Eva Barry potted the club order. Elections are also held at our September meeting. Helen Crotty was elected president, Talia Michelle, Vice President, Anna Leyba, Secretary, and Linn Furnish, Treasurer. Eva Barry serves as Assistant Treasurer.

The speaker at our February meeting was John Garlisch of the Bernalillo County Extension Service, who talked about "Irises Tricks and Tips," including diseases and pests that affect irises. Our March speaker was member Dave Ferguson on "Iris Companion Plantings." In June, Pete Mc Grath spoke about growing and hybridizing Arils and Arilbreds. Eva Barry and Rae Phillips gave a joint presentation in April on preparing and transporting iris show entries.

Eva Barry and Talia Michelle chaired the show "Irises for Everyone" on April 28. Show winners were: Best of Show Eva Barry with ADOREE; Best Arilbred Eva Barry with NEW VISION; Best Section A for Tall Bearded Eva Barry with ADOREE; First Runner Up for Tall Bearded Eva Barry with HI LOVE; Best Section C for Aril/Arilbred Eva Barry with NEW VISION; Best Section D for MDB & Medians Edith Iwan with POKEMON; Best Section E for Miscellaneous Cindy Rivera with *I. tectorum* WOOLONG; Best Section F for Historic Cindy Rivera with INDIAN CHIEF, Best Section H for Collections Susan Davis with MISS MAUVE; Silver Medal to Cindy Rivera with 14 blue ribbons; Bronze Medal to Eva Barry with 8 blue ribbons; People's Choice Donna Jacobsen with BATIK; Best Unnamed Iris Donna Jacobsen. We gained nine new members at the show and sold out of potted irises (potted from leftover 2018 sale rhizomes and cared for by Eva Barry).



Our 2019 rhizome sale was the best in many years. We sold out of most TB rhizomes in the first two hours. We gained four more new members at the sale. We now have a total of 42 members, and several of our new members from the show worked hard at the sale.

Our online presence has been greatly improved this year when past President Brad Jacobsen made our Facebook page more user friendly and Rae Phillips developed our new website, [www.albuquerquearilandirisociety.com](http://www.albuquerquearilandirisociety.com).

We are planning to host the 2020 Region 23 Convention on one of the last two weekends in August at the Mariott Courtyard in Albuquerque. Rae Phillips is chairing the Convention Committee.



**Figure 1 Albuquerque Aril and Iris Society Show Table**

**Enchanted Vista Iris Society (EVIS)**

Submitted  
by Patricia

Randall

In our ongoing quest to provide new and very educational programs, especially for our new members, we began our year in February with a program presented by Eva Barry on How to Stage an Iris Show. The information contained in the program enlightened our newer members on what is really required to host an interesting and

successful show each year. The roster of programs continued with another great demonstration on Artistic Designs for the show in March, along with a super printout of tips and hints by Pegi Blackwell-Smith. These artistic design programs and demonstrations are provided as a means to encourage more of our members to try their hand at creating something beautiful and interesting for our shows. And, of course, the all-time favorite and timely April program provided by Eva Barry and Rae Phillips on the myriad of details that go into selecting, transporting, and preparing our irises and "Getting Ready for the Show".

We deviated a bit from the norm with our May meeting by having a relaxing potluck in lieu of our usual formal meeting. We utilized this time to review our 2019 show with pro and con comments from our members. We were trying to get a feel for what was done correctly, and where we could improve any aspects from the set-up, the staging of the show, and to the actual show itself. We have moved our location from a much smaller recreation center to the larger one located on Sabana Grande. The facility is quite large and is very light and bright. It allows for more room needed for the preparation of our horticulture and artistic segments of the show. And, the best part of hosting our shows here are that we members no longer have to locate and haul our own tables needed for our set-up....Hooray! We also noted that we had a far greater viewing public than any of our previous shows, which is always a good thing.

In June it was back to the normal mode of meetings with a program and judge's training session on Miniature Tall Bearded Irises, along with a printout of program information and beautiful pictures provided by Patricia Randall. For our July meeting we borrowed one of the program presenters from the Santa Fe Iris Society by having Tom Waters come down and provide us with a fantastic program on Arilbred Irises. Tom provided some enlightening information on the new classifications of the Aril-Meds we will need to include in our show schedules in the future.

In August members Kristen Ikenberg and Robin Kishbaugh will be providing a program on Container Gardening and how it works with irises. Both Kristen and Robin pot a majority of their irises in large pots and containers as opposed to iris beds, so, who better to pass along their great tips and hints to make this gardening procedure successful.

This year we have opted to begin holding our iris sale at the Sabana Grande Recreation Center as opposed to the Corrales Farmers Market. The tent and table set-up, along with the heat factor of the open market site were cited as the biggest determining factors for the change. It will take time to get the information out to the public so they will attend our sale, but we will give it our best effort for our maiden venture.

Our September meeting provides a great time for the Show Awards and Iris Raffle and highly anticipated suspense of which new iris we will be picking for our awards. Several years ago, we voted to discontinue awarding our show winners with iris artifacts, but rather to receive a new iris for our efforts. After all, irises are and always will be what we are about anyway.

Our final business meeting for the year culminates with our October meeting. When we have a slate of new officers to install that is the highlight of this month's meeting. We cap the Installation Ceremony and business meeting off with Fun and Games with prizes to boot.

We do not hold a meeting in November, so we culminate our years' worth of meetings, programs and events with our Holiday Potluck Party and White Elephant Gift Exchange in December. What a wonderful way to close out the year.

And by the way- - - -**Happy Holidays to all of our wonderful iris friends.**

## **Mesilla Valley Iris Society (MVIS)**

Submitted by Debbie Frasier, President.

2021 National Convention- Howie Dash will give a full report on this. In the last month we have prepared several beds including the Farm and Ranch Museum, and New Mexico State University. I would like to recognize our Executive board Howie Dash, Scarlet Ayres, and Roy Covey who showed up every workday to prepare these beds. By Regional Convention time we should have just planted 3,000 iris in 6 beds- Farm and Ranch Museum, New Mexico State University, Blue J Iris, Calhoun Flower Farms, Scarlet Ayres, and Wes and Cynthia Wilson. And a special THANK YOU to any of you who helped us.

February 2019 guest speaker Anna Cad- hybridizer spoke on Spurias

Membership has increased by 5 new members.

Growing Iris Growers (MVIS youth affiliates) Children are given free rhizomes on Sunday afternoon at our Iris Sale.

### **MVIS 2018-19 Highlights**

Speaker-

April 2019 Garden Club Tours were again set up by Roy Covey of our members Iris gardens.

MVIS Iris Show April 2019 had 104 entries. 82 cultivars, 20 seedlings, (18 TB's, 2 AB's)

Best in Show- Jedi Princess TBSA- Howie Dash

Best TB- Sunglasses Needed- Steve

Best Arilbred - Heart of Hearts - Jacqui

Best IB - Tact - Scarlett

Best Median (except IB) - Dividing Line - Roy

Best Dutch Iris - Miss Saigon - Steve

Best Species - Tectorum - Scarlett

Best Seedling - HADK 13-5 - Steve

Runner Up Seedling - ADG 14-03-11 - Howie

Silver Medal Scarlett Ayres 9 ribbons

Bouquets from Show entries were distributed to assisted living facilities

May 2019 Club Iris Order is from Winterberry Gardens (spoon family)

September 2019 Big Dig sale coming up Wilson's are digging rebloomers

## **Pecos Valley Iris Society (PVIS)**

Submitted by Georgia Scheneker, President.

The Pecos Valley Iris Society continues to have a presence in Roswell with fourteen members. The members meet the second Tuesday of the month (excluding summer months) at Peachtree Village Retirement Community where President Georgia Schoenecker resides.

With the goal to increase the interest in iris and increase membership, greater thought and focus was given to having educational speakers and program topics. Publishing upcoming meetings in the local newspaper and welcoming the public has been beneficial with the addition of new members.

Some of the programs that we have had are Bob Hutchings presenting “Is Your Iris Bed Ready for Spring?”. We also learned the healing benefits of herbs and flowers from Sandra Stewart, owner of Down to Earth Nutrition Center. Howard Dash presented “Useful Iris Growing Tips in the Southwest” and we look forward to assisting him and the committee for the 2021 AIS Convention held in Las Cruces.

We appreciate each of our members and their various contributions to our organization. Each is so important to the current and future of the Pecos Valley Iris Society.

### **Santa Fe Iris Society (SFIS)**

Submitted by Mary Moon, SFIS President

This has been a very interesting year beginning with a judges training by Jim Hedgecock from Comanche Acres Iris Farm. Tom Waters presented a wonderful program on Arils and Arilbred. Patricia Randall gave a super judges training on garden judging at Paul Hill's beautiful seedling garden. Our annual show was very well attended, and we gained 7 new members there. Members again had a booth at the Santa Fe Market Day Fair. We are busy preparing for our rhizome sale to be held on August 3. Our iris Memorial garden is doing well and is a joy to visitors. Several members are taking part in our popular Acquisition program and we look forward to seeing 2017 rhizome introductions for sale on Aug 3. It's been a good time and we look forward to 2020. Pat Feather gave a very helpful presentation on prepping and showing irises for the iris show

### **Region 23 News**

#### **Welcome to our new members**

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome new American Iris Society members to our region. We also would like to take this opportunity to welcome new members to the various clubs. We hope your association with the regional and national members about our favorite flower will prove to be beneficial and educational and that you make many new life-long friends.

Welcome.... Welcome....Welcome

#### **AIS Region 23 2016 Annual Honorary Awards**

The Region 23 Service Award is expected to have a positive effect on the region by stimulating members to lead or help with additional activities. The Service Award would allow the region to show its appreciation to members for their years of dedication and excellent work. This year the service award was won by Eva Barry. She has served as President and heavily involved with two clubs.



### Guidelines for nominations to the Region 23 Service Award

A volunteer should be nominated in writing by another Region 23 member who is not related to the nominee. The written nomination should include justification over several years of volunteer iris activity, such as:

- Presentation of a long-term view of the volunteer's iris activities
- Long term service in a local club, service in the region, and/or service at the National level
- Maintaining a display garden
- Leadership positions held
- Growing and showing iris
- Education the public about iris and iris activities
- Writing articles for publication
- Photographing iris and giving presentations

## 2019 Regional Convention-Las Cruces

Mesilla Valley Iris Society hosted the convention at the same time the plantings were made for the 2021 convention. This way, the other clubs can participate in planting the irises for the convention in two years. All the volunteers divided into two groups and traveled to the 6 gardens over several days and planted the nearly 700 irises.

### Convention Plantings Helpers

We would also like to thank everyone for helping with planting the convention irises in the gardens around town. Your effort is greatly appreciated.

Howie	Scarlett	Debbie	David
Jane	Jacquie	Bob	Joyce
Bob	Pegi	Roy	Mary
Shari	Isabel		

Again, if we have forgotten anyone, we apologize and thank you for your help with the convention.



**Figure 1 Mary Moon gets ready to plant convention irises at the Fabian Garcia Science Center in Las Cruces**



**Figure 2 Front Roy and Debbie, back Jacquie. Resting after preparing iris beds at the Farm and Ranch Museum**



**Figure 3** Volunteers from all clubs meet at La Posta after a hard day of planting convention irises. Clockwise; Mary Moon, Scarlett Ayres, Debbie Frasier, D. Boyle, Jacquie Pountney, Bob Pountney, Joyce Hutchings, Roy Covey, Pegi Blackwell-Smith, Isabel Olsen

**Roll Call for Regional affiliates:**

AAIS - 6

EVIS - 6

MVIS - 7

PVIS - 3

SFIS – 13

Visitors - 4

## Convention Agenda

Thursday, August 15 to Friday, August 16 –  
Plant AIS 2021 Gardens

Saturday, August 17

11:30 am – noon

Registration

12 noon – 1 pm	Buffet Lunch complements of MVIS and Socialization
1 pm – 2 pm	Welcome and Region 23 Business Meeting, Scarlett Ayres
2 pm – 2:15 pm	Break
2:15 pm – 3 pm	Claudette Hulce – Birds Unlimited - Hummingbirds
3:00 pm – 3:15 pm	Break
3:15 pm – 4:00 pm	Guest Speaker.....Carol Sutherland – Entomology as it affects iris
4:00 pm – 4:15 pm	Break
4:15 pm – 4:45 pm	Guest Speaker – Howie Dash – 2021 AIS National Convention
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	No-host social hour (wine and drinks available separately at Hotel bar)
7:00 pm – 10:30 pm	Banquet, Silent Auction, Live Auction, Raffles

#### Sunday – August 18

	Featured Speaker – Hugh Stout – Stout Gardens on Dancingtree
8:00 am – 9:00 am	Registration, Continental Breakfast and Socializing
9:00 am – 10:30 am	Judges Training – Tall Bearded Iris – Hugh Stout
10:30 am – 10:45 am	Break
10:45am – noon	Judges Training Continued

### Minutes August 17-18, 2019 by Fran Day

1. Meeting was called to order by RVP Scarlett Ayres at 1:05 pm.
2. Scarlett welcomed everyone to the convention.
3. Scarlett thanked everyone who helped plant 680 irises in preparation for the 2021 AIS National Convention being held in Las Cruces.

Type	Count
AB	9
BB	35
IB	45
LA	40
MDB	5
MTB	24
SDB	28
Spec-X	1
TB	493
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>680</b>

4. Roll Call for Regional affiliates:
  - AAIS - 2
  - EVIS - 3
  - MVIS - 8

PVIS - 4

SFIS – 4

**5. Election of Officers – the slate of officers presented for the next 3 years are:**

**RVP** – Eva Barry

**VP** – Jacqueline Pountney

**Secretary** – Scarlett Ayres

**Treasurer** – Debra Bilberry

Mary Villareal made motion to accept the slate of officers and Mary Moon seconded. Motion carried.

**6. Meeting Minutes.** The minutes from last meeting are in the convention booklet. Mary Moon made a motion to approve the minutes as provided in the booklet, Eva Barry seconded, motion carried.

**7. Treasurer's Report** – Debra could not attend the convention but sent the treasurer's report. PVIS, MVIS and SFIS have caught up with their dues which leaves a balance of \$1,284.86.

**8. Chairman Reports**

- **Judge's Training Chairman** – Patricia Randall gave Scarlett her judges report to present to the convention attendees. Judges turned in their yearly report to Patricia.

- **RVP** - Scarlett will be updating the regional website.

**9. Affiliate Reports** – These reports are included in the convention booklet.

**New Business**

- **AIS Info**

-100<sup>th</sup> AIS anniversary next year in Newark, NJ.

- AIS wants a blip from each club about their activities. Pictures and an article would be good – Send this to Jim Morris.

- AIS website is undergoing modifications so expect issues.

- You can find membership status by going to: <http://aislookup.org>

- AIS is developing a YouTube video.

- Contact Hooker Nichols if you are looking for a speaker. Educational programs are free of charge.

- Howie Dash is on the AIS board for three more years.



- AIS talk 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 6:00 pm. You can ask to be on the agenda.
- There will be 6 gardens at the 101th AIS Convention in Las Cruces. The theme is Iris Enchantment. This is the first convention in New Mexico.

### **Program**

Claudette Hulce- Wild Birds Unlimited – Hummingbirds. Claudette gave a very interesting talk on hummingbirds. It answered many of my questions.

Hugh Stout, Hybridizer also gave a talk about irises and then gave two judge's training tests.

This convention was very informative, fun and we got to reconnect with many of our irises friends we haven't see for a while and to make new friend.

Good Job Mesilla Valley Iris Society.

Fran Day, RVP Secretary

### **Region 23 Convention Speakers**

The convention was smaller than recent years, but we still had some great presenters. Carol Sutherland, the state entomologist talked about bugs. Howie Dash, the chairman of the convention.

### **Dr. Carol Sutherland-Bugs**

Dr. Carol Sutherland has been at New Mexico State University since 1980 in various capacities.

She is an entomologist by training and earned her Ph.D. in the subject from Oregon State University. While on the faculty at the University of Florida, she worked on Integrated Pest Management and biological control of various insect pests of vegetables, focusing on leafminer flies. In her long association with NMSU, she has worked on range caterpillars, grasshoppers, ants, and a great variety of insects and their relatives as submitted for identification by the public, farmers and ranchers, homeowners, businesses, colleagues, other agencies and organizations.

She spends much of her time making identifications, summarizing biological and control information for these specimens, supporting county agents and participating in numerous entomology outreach programs for youth (4-H and FFA) and adults. She also spends considerable time working with Master Gardeners and the Pesticide Applicator Training and Certification programs.

She is half-time as an Extension Entomologist with the Extension Plant Sciences Department at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces and half-time as State Entomologist with the Bureau of Entomology and Nursery Industries, New Mexico Department of Agriculture.





**Figure 2 Carol Sutherland, state entomologist gave a presentation on bugs at the 2019 regional convention.**

### **Claudette Hulce – Wild Birds Unlimited - Hummingbirds**

Claudette Hulce works for Wild Birds Unlimited. Wild Birds Unlimited is the original and largest franchise system of backyard bird feeding and nature specialty stores with more than 300 locations throughout the United States and Canada. WBU specializes in bringing people and nature together.

### **AIS News**

2020 is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the AIS at the NY Botanicals Garden. So the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be held at NY and these gardens included Presby will be on the garden tour. MVIS contributed \$500 for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary fund. AIS is planning numerous special events.

### **Articles**

#### **The Birth of an Iris Washing Rack**

Randall, Rio Rancho, New Mexico

By  
Patricia

Who would ever believe that a slatted garden bench would be the inspiration for the design of an iris washing rack???

I, like everyone else that grows irises, used to wash each rhizome by hand. And I certainly can't think of anything that is more time consuming and tedious than that chore (unless one takes into account house cleaning duties)! It was during one of these washing sessions, while preparing for an iris sale here in New Mexico, that I kept wracking my brain (probably considered a lost cause by many who know me) to think of an easier way to accomplish this chore. After washing yet one more batch of my rhizomes, I took the basket of roots and sat them on the garden bench in our atrium to dry. Looking down at the bench I noted the slats and the spacing between them, and BINGO the light went on, a couple of brain cells sparked against each other causing a thought to actually cross my feeble mind. I took a couple of rhizomes and proceeded to slide the fan down between the slats with the roots facing up. So-o-o-o when I got ready to wash the next batch of rhizomes, I drug the bench out on the lawn, placed the fans down through the slats and proceeded to wash my rhizomes. I used the power spray from the nozzle and noted that this did a great job of washing off all the dirt, leaving nice clean roots. From there I then set up three buckets for the sanitizing soak, and double rinse in clean water. I was still at this task when my husband Johnny arrived home from work. He could not believe his eyes-----using our lovely garden bench to wash irises no less! But the idea of crafting a similar structure for this purpose was born.



The hunt was on for materials to build the rack. Scrap lumber was rounded up and cut to fit the new design. Slats that could be moved to accommodate the different sizes of rhizomes was needed for ultimate versatility. The prototype was crude to say the least, but it worked it's wonders. To eliminate the need for constant bending over to wash the rhizomes, the rack was wired to a ladder that could be set up and used as a scaffold (in other words, an upside-down U shape).

I then placed my buckets on a plank that was placed atop a set of sawhorses next to the washing rack, and VOILA the Randall washing, sanitizing, rinsing and drying system was born.

Several years ago, the design of the draft version was reborn, or basically modified, to become a stand-alone unit. A pair of folding legs had been salvaged from a broken folding table to serve as the foundation of the new rack. To make the slats easier to move back and forth, a system was needed to house the wing nuts to be used for this purpose. We spent at least an hour at the local True Value Hardware Store looking for something to fit the need, but alas no luck.



We then spent several hours wandering around near-by Home Depot Center looking for something we could use. We finally came across display of runners used for sliding closet doors found a shape and length of runner that would for our rack. Hence, our new improved movable system was conceived.



the  
the  
and  
work  
slat



I now use three plastic tubs, set on an aluminum folding table, for the sanitizing and rinsing duty. Once the rack is loaded with rhizomes it only takes me about 30 minutes to power wash, sanitize and double rinse around 200 rhizomes in one cycle. The sanitizing and rinsing tubs are drained and refilled after each cycle to keep the bleach solution right and the rinse

water clear and free of bleach.



We (my hubby and I), and our trusty little rack, have made the trip circuit to other locations to assist with “big digs” in other gardens, as well as the iris display garden at the Albuquerque Garden Center.



Following, is a diagram and list of materials needed for the construction of everyone’s personal washing rack. All it takes is a bit of knowledge of power tools, time and paint and you are ready for that daunting task of washing your next batch of iris rhizomes. Good luck, and HAPPY WASHING!!!

Materials needed: Lumber consisting of 2" x 4"s for the frame, 1" x 2"s for the slats, salvaged folding table legs (folding table legs can also be purchased from Harbor Freight for around \$20), folding closet door brackets, metal strapping (or metal washers cut to fit the slot), wing nuts, L shaped brackets, wood screws and paint. We used white paint (to seal the wood), but you can let your imagination determine just the right shade for your creation!

If a set of folding legs are not available, one could just construct stationary legs on the rack unit. Or, as one friend did, it could all be constructed of ½" square metal tubing with legs welded in place. One is only limited by their imagination and mechanical skills.



**Washing rack blueprint:** The foundation for the washing rack is an “I” formation of 2" x 4" boards. The two end pieces are 36" long and are attached to a 43" long cross member board. The cross-member board is attached to



the two end pieces with 4" metal “L” brackets. This forms the foundation of the rack to which the folding legs and closet door brackets are attached. The movable slats are 48" long 1" x 2" boards. Holes are drilled through the end of each slat. The wing nuts are slid into the U-shaped bracket and then attaching one end of the slat. This procedure continues until all of the slats are attached at both ends. We used 12 slats for our design, as the extra room allows proper slot width

adjustments to be made as needed. All one needs to do is loosen the wing nuts to move the slats to minimize or maximize the slot opening to accommodate the size of rhizomes being washed. Pack the rhizomes as tightly together as possible, without damaging the fans, as this eliminates movement of the rhizomes when power washing them.

## Wood Ash – A Trace Element Bonanza!

By O. M. Otte. PA

*O.M. "Morrie" Otte is both a chemical engineer and the talented editor of the Region 3 Newspaper (in the 80's) where this article appeared in Spring, 1980. He shared this with Region 23 in 1986 where it was reprinted in the Fall Region 23 newsletter. Note that wood ash is alkaline. Since New Mexico soils are often alkaline (and our water too), care must be taken in its use. If you use wood ash, please report how you use wood ash in your garden and how you overcome the pH problem. Did you use Sulfur?*

The most common question regarding proper and complete fertilization of irises (or other plants) that follows a soil management discussion is - "How do I determine whether my garden is deficient in the micro or trace mineral nutrients and are these trace nutrients lacking, " How can I overcome some of these vital soil requirements?

Without extensive and very expensive soil analysis that probes far beyond the typical commercial laboratory "soil test", the average iris grower is economically excluded from the solutions to his trace nutrient questions or soil deficiency problems.

Cheer up! There is an excellent source of most micronutrient or trace mineral nutrients readily available to any iris grower willing to exert a minimum amount of effort (usually at no expense) in locating a generous and continuous source of supply. What is this mysterious and magical free source of such sought after and essential soil ingredient? Are you ready? WOOD ASH!

My parents were avid gardeners, and from my earliest experiences resulting from my parents encouraging me "to have my very own garden", I was taught the value of wood ash in encouraging both flowers and vegetables to produce a better yield. So, for over forty years I have been using wood ash successfully on everything I grew. It worked! I never completely knew why, and even today, I still intend to continue searching for additional information and sources of these little discussed, but vital, nutrients.

After I used wood ash on my tall bearded iris beds, it was apparent that those iris plants that got a "dose" of wood ash outperformed the clumps that missed out, simply because my supply of wood ash was limited. Without exception every color classification iris show ribbon I ever won was from one of my wood ash treated iris plants!

Wood ash has served me well. My neighbor has a fireplace and a wood burning stove in his basement family room. At my urging he has applied his wood ash on parts of his vegetable garden (he isn't a flower grower), and it shows a dramatic vegetable crop increase in the sections of his garden where only wood ash has been applied. Let's discuss these "secret ingredients".

Have you ever noticed as you strolled through the woods that the violet plants are larger, the blooms are taller and more profuse, and the bloom color is more intense when this particular wild violet plant is growing nearby to where some hiker or camper has built a wood fire a year or two ago? The other violet plants are growing in so-called "rich woods dirt". You may have noticed these same superior violet plant characteristics occur in a plant growing in the residue of a completely rotted fallen tree or tree stump that may have died 25 or more years ago.

What accounts for this vast time differential, when it is obvious that wood in some way was somehow the source of the superior growth characteristics noted in each of the violet plants discussed?

The answer, of course, is by burning or combustion of the wood, organic materials are rapidly (minutes-hours) converted to the residual mineral ash solids and to the large volume of volatile liquids and gases that escape as wood smoke. Complete or efficient combustion converts complex organic-mineral compounds into metallic oxide solids that are usually relatively soluble in water and, therefore, are readily available to the plant. These wood ash solids or metal oxides are highly-extremely alkaline, pH -9.5, and readily react with acidic soil ingredients (if present) to perform the equivalent soil neutralization accomplished by ground limestone, lime, or other alkali agent application.

Iris growers in the Southwest can still benefit from applying wood ash to gain the micro mineral nutrients, but they must take note of the additional wood ash alkalinity effects on their already over-alkaline soils. Acidic commercial fertilizers tailored to soil testing recommendations offer the southwestern iris grower the simplest and most profitable solution to excessive alkalinity. I have gardened in the Eastern, Great Lakes, Midwestern, High Plains, Rocky Mountain, and Southwestern U.S., and wood ash has provided me superior plant growth wherever I have used it.

Superior growth from wood ash you say? Now where am I, a city dweller, going to find a source of wood ash? What kind of nonsense is this?

The U.S. Dept. of Energy has projected 9 million wood burning stoves and furnaces to be in use throughout the U.S. by the end of calendar 1980! In addition, there are wood burning fireplaces (current census question), Bar-B-Q pits, charcoal grills, and in the Southwest, the hickory smoked rib restaurants. In some areas of the United States, home incinerators are still legal, and these provide ash from wood, paper, eggshells, bones, and other household garbage. With a minimum effort any conscientious iris grower can locate a ready source of wood ash close by to his home or iris garden. Check the want ads for firewood sellers and follow up on their best local customers.



If you find you have a choice, you should choose dry wood ash from the most efficient wood burning source available. This will avoid applying higher percentages of charcoal or other unburned organic materials that in effect dilute the applied mineral content. Wood ash sources listed in the order of decreasing mineral content are: (1) Wood burning furnaces, (2) Wood burning stoves or space heaters. (3) Commercial Bar-8-Q pits (4) Wood burning fireplaces or public park picnic grills, (5) Home incinerators, (6) Charcoal grills. This list is not meant to be all inclusive, nor are the listings necessarily exact in every case since the real criteria of wood ash quality is the actual wood burning efficiency of the burner. Cold dry wood ash can be transported and stored in easily carried small, metal garbage cans or heavy walled plastic bags.

O.K., now you feel like "Little Polly Flanders Playing in The Cinders". You have a bucket of wood ash. What have you acquired that is unavailable in commercial fertilizer? Let's see if we can discuss it and work it out to sensible conclusions together.

### **SOURCE OF ANALYSIS DATA**

First of all, we will be discussing an emission spectrograph analysis of typical wood ash that was removed from my own high efficiency wood burning furnace. The actual analysis work was done at a multi-million-dollar laboratory by one of my scientific associates (an iris growing friend) using very sophisticated laboratory equipment and techniques. Hopefully, additional iris grower-oriented information will become available from several other planned future soil conditioning investigations. Regardless, let's move on with the discussion of wood ash.

In order to emphasize the benefits of applying wood ash obtained from a local firewood source, we better follow the life history of our discussion sample of wood ash used in this analysis.

### **SOURCE AND LIFE HISTORY OF THE WOOD ASH SAMPLE**

Wild cherry wood salvaged from the treetops of commercial logging operations was the furnace fuel from which our wood ash sample originated. The tree growth rings easily counted in the stump indicated about 60 years of regular, healthy growth in our specimen tree that grew in a mixed timber stand of oaks, ash, maple, hickory, and scattered specimens of many other native Pennsylvania tree.

The fact that the wood from our cherry tree grew in an oak environment is important in this sample discussion since oak leaves create a very acid soil condition with acids strong enough to break down the existing rocks, shale, and red clay in which our Western Pennsylvania wood source grew. In other words, our wood ash sample benefitted from the highly acidic growth conditions created by the oak trees that actually permitted the valuable trace minerals to be released from both the soil and the subsoil (in a water soluble form) to become available through the root system of our healthy 60-year old prime timber cherry tree.

We stress a healthy 60-year old tree since this excellent timber quality tree was obviously getting all of the required soil nutrients to maintain its rapid, massive, regular growth throughout its long life.



If our tree age estimate of 60 years is fairly accurate (the center heart-wood rings were not counted), our water soluble supply of trace element nutrients becomes more understandable and further emphasizes the real high-dollar value of wood ash as a concentrated easily applied source of almost all of the known, required plant growth nutrients and particularly the micro mineral or trace elements.

We emphasized a local source of wood ash. An Oklahoma or California iris grower will hardly seek a Pennsylvania source of wood ash. However, as another example, mature, healthy trees from a specific Oklahoma area would be acclimated to the local soil, moisture, and environmental conditions of its particular Oklahoma growing location. Firewood from this Oklahoma tree would provide in the resulting wood ash, a concentrated source of the trace mineral elements required for healthy, vigorous iris plant growth in that same specific geographical section of Oklahoma. Please remember that we are dealing with the minor (excluding the major fertilizer nutrients nitrogen, phosphorous. and potash) or trace minerals grower's garden. YOUR local source wood ash that was derived from local healthy mature trees, should provide you with an ample supply of the majority of all trace mineral nutrients required for you to realize healthier, more vigorous iris growth. Wood ash from weak diseased trees may be partially deficient. Remember, wood ash from healthy, mature, full size trees (regardless

of tree variety) that grew near to (as close as possible) your iris bed will match your iris bed requirements as closely as nature can manage. The real clincher is simply thus: "For a reasonable price you can't get anything better. " Free" wood ash (discounting minimal time, travel, and effort) certainly carries the right price. All plants and trees do not have the same exact trace mineral requirements or retention ability. Wood ash is such a rich, concentrated trace element source that your iris can accept whatever they require and reject the unneeded materials or surplus through their root system providing you do not kill you plants with the intended kindness of over application. As with any fertilizer, good judgement must prevail.

My personal wood ash use experience has been very good with ins and other plants when a **one-quarter inch thick layer of dry, powdery wood ash is applied on the soil surface at least two inches away from the plant stems or from the exposed portion of the Iris rhizome.** Wood ash applied as described above is usually dissolved by rain and disappears (except for the charcoal or unburned wood) within a month or two of application by which time I have usually repeated with another application as described provided I have the required amount of wood ash. I suggest that if your supply of wood ash is limited, you should preferentially treat your pink, red, orange, dark blue, or purple iris varieties first. More on blossom color effects later.

If you grow iris on "faith" and have applied wood ash as just recommended, what have you just done? What happened to the promised sophisticated analysis data? What kind of potential plant benefits together with wood ash ingredients? Why not buy and apply the commercial fertilizers as recommended by the typical soil testing techniques since the report was written to cover my ins bed?

First and foremost, you should "Feed the soil, not the plant". Consider "soil testing recommendations" as assuring a typical basic "balanced diet" provided that the report recommendations are thoroughly understood and followed while using good common sense. Trace element feedings, including the micronutrient content of wood ash applications, can be considered as "diet supplements" or as "plant vitamin and mineral pep pills".

Example: A mature oak, maple, cherry, or black walnut tree evaporates 1,000 gals. of water a day when in full leaf (May 15 to Oct. 15 or 153 days per summer in this western Pa. location). If we ignore all bare tree (no leaves) evaporation, use 7 pounds (low) as the weight of gallon of water, 150 full-leaf days per summer, and use only the last 25 summers of tree growth (totally ignoring the first 35 years of water requirements is very conservative), we end up with an astounding estimated number of pounds of water required during the estimated life of this specimen tree: 1,000 gals/day x 7 lbs/gal x 150 days/summer x 25 summers of mature size evaporation = 26 million plus pounds of water absorbed even by our most conservative calculation assumptions.

Now then if a trace mineral nutrient was present in the growth area soil moisture at the lowest measure concentration of only one part by weight in a million parts, then the tree in our example had a total lifetime root system absorption of 26 pounds of this chemically pure rare nutrient (1PPM) to use, convert, store, or discard by discharging the unneeded excess through the roots in order to maintain its healthy 60 years of regular, rapid growth.

Now then, here are the wood ash analysis results

#### Actual Analysis of Wood Ash

Sample- as received (typical furnace ash)

pH9.5- extremely alkaline

Ash- Weight Percent	81.59*
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Volatiles & combustibles- Weight Percent	<u>18.41**</u>
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Sample - Weight Percent	100.00
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\*\* Removed by holding the as-received furnace ash at 1,000°F. in an oxygen rich atmosphere for 24 hrs. This material is extracted due to the temperature and complete combustion and passes off in gaseous form.

\* This laboratory ash analysis procedure requires preparation of a pure ash sample material (listed as Ash\*) for use in the Emission Spectrograph.

..

This Ash\* provided the following data:

#### EMMISSION SPECTROGRAPHIC DATA ON CHERRY WOOD ASH

Metal or Element	Chemist's Symbol	Weight Percent	Parts per Million	Nutrient Classification
Aluminum	Al	6.0 #	--	Unknown
Barium	Ba	--	1,000	Unknown
Boron	B	--	300	Micro
Calcium	Ca	10 .0	--	High
Chromium	Cr	--	600	Unknown
Cobalt	Co	--	Under 100	Micro (certain specific groups of plants)
Copper	Cu	--	40	Micro
Iron	Fe	2.0	--	Micro
Lead	Pb	--	Under 100	Micro
Magnesium	Mg	2.0	--	High
Manganese	Mn	1.0	--	Micro
Molybdenum	Mo	--	?	Detectable only above 10 PPM
Nickel	Ni	-	400	Unknown
Potassium	K	2.9	--	Massive
Silicon	Si	25.0 <sup>#</sup>	--	Unknown
Sodium	Na	0.9	--	Unknown
Strontium	Sr	0.2	--	Unknown
Titanium	Ti	1.0	--	Unknown
Uranium	U	--	Under 100	Unknown
Vanadium	V	--	Under 100	Unknown
Zirconium	Zr	--	100-1000	Unknown

Conversion Factor: 1 % by weight equals 10,000 PPM

# Very high-attributed to dirt (clay) on bark surfaces of field cut dragged, unsplit cherry wood fuel.

The "essential" elements currently recognized by the scientific world as vital to plant growth are listed and defined below in categories of descending quantitative requirements. Neither quantity nor position in these tables indicates any plant requirement preference or priority. EACH ELEMENT LISTED IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT FOR ALL PLANT GROWTH AND EACH AND EVERY LISTED ELEMENT IS CATEGORIZED AS ESSENTIAL

#### ESSENTIAL ELEMENT REQUIREMENT CLASSIFICATIONS

**Unlimited-** Sources: Air and Water

Elements: Hydrogen (H) Carbon (C) Oxygen (O)

<b>Massive-</b>	Sources: Soil, Fertilizers (usually highest tonnage per acre) Elements: Nitrogen (N) Phosphorus (P) Potassium (K) or Potash
<b>High-</b>	Sources: Soil, Dolomitic Limestone (provides Calcium and 13% Magnesium), Organic Sulfur (usually less tonnage per acre than the Massive Category)  Elements: Calcium (Ca) Magnesium (Mg) Sulfur (S)
<b>Trace or Micro-</b>	Sources: Soil. WOOD ASH (ounces per sq. ft).  Elements: Boron (B) Chlorine (Cl) Cobalt (Co) Copper (Cu) Iron (Fe) Manganese (Mn) Molybdenum (Mo) Zinc (Zn)
<b>Unknown-</b>	Science has not determined that any of these mineral elements are essential. However, these scientists forgot to tell this cherry tree, and the tree alone decided these “unknowns” were worth retaining. For all “unknowns” listed the sole known source was wood ash from typical dirty wood.

Unknown will vary with geological rock structure, soil age, type, source, and previous conditioning and usage; environmental influences (volcanoes, glaciers, water source and drainage); and last, but not least, mankind's industrial contamination.

Studying the chart. you will note that no matter how hard I tout wood ash, some essential nutrients are totally absent, and the elements are not included in this emission spectrograph data. How do I account for this, and if the analysis is so darn accurate- why didn't this tree die long ago!

My wood burning furnace combustion temperatures and the laboratory ashing technique required for the Ash• preparation would have volatilized the phosphorous, sulfur, chlorine. fluorine, and zinc originally contained in the unburned wood.

Only one micronutrient that is recognized as essential to healthy plant growth showed up as unaccounted for or missing (less than 10 PPM) in our sample, namely, Molybdenum, symbol Mo. Since the amount required is known to be very low, it is possible that the tree had all the molybdenum it required and that the amount fell under the instrument's accurate measuring range of greater than 10 PPM. Under 10 PPM data would not be reported because of this known instrument limitation.

All in all, our wood ash application could be considered as a health insurance policy (trace elements) on a plant that is already well protected by sufficient typical life insurance coverage (commercial fertilizer nitrogen-phosphorus-potash).

Fringe benefits may accrue to the user of wood ash in blossom color tones, light reflectivity, fluorescent color range, color intensity, color range, and resistance of the flower to be subject to sun

fading. All this is subject to debate and to intense future research projects needed to establish the exact blossom color contributors and chemical requirements.

Elements	Predominant Chemical Salt Color
Iron	Colors some flowers pink (white hydrangeas turn pink with application of iron sulfate. Pink is red added to white).
Chromium	Salts are yellow -orange.
Copper	Salts are green-blue (blue hydrangeas result from copper sulfate treatment)
Manganese	Simple salts are pink while some manganese complexes are deep purple
Nickel	Salts are green

All colors listed above are for sunlight. Other metals and mixed metal salts can produce a full spectrum of color in sunlight. These salts in solution in plant blossom cells will affect color, but the exact effect of a given amount of a given salt or compound has yet to be scientifically determined. Still, an old, white, washed-out rose turned to an attractive medium pink with no care other than regular wood ash applications in my yard. Similar results occurred on a second identical bush following chelated iron applications made by my neighbor's wife in Denver. (Soil in Denver is Iron deficient).

Several knowledgeable iris growers (one garden judge) vowed that one of my pink iris varieties was mislabeled because the pink blossom color was "too intense" compared to the other blooming specimens of this same iris variety seen in the Pittsburgh area. At the time. I was more interested in winning show ribbons than in disclosing my growing secrets, so I made no comments. (Do you believe that?) Additionally, I had no data on hand at that time to correlate flower success, micronutrient content, and rhizome increase rates to wood ash application. Two years of added, fairly successful iris growing experience plus the analysis data I have presented in this article further confirm my deal for wood ash.

### SUMMARY

Applications of wood ash can be a real peptonic for "soil sick" iris plants. If your irises didn't need it, there is no harm done, but if those iris plants did need micronutrient --well, then, the results can be spectacular and oh so rewarding!

Do you really think that you'll feel guilty asking some wood burner for his wood ashes? Then Buy 'Em! Pay off the donor with a 1980 A.I.S. Membership!

Author's Note: After reading this wood ash article, my proofreader asked:

Question: Why can't I count on obtaining the required trace elements being available in the commercial fertilizer I use on my iris instead of using wood ash?

My answer: Commercial fertilizers may contain one or many of these trace elements, but rarely will a fertilizer producer list the included trace element content, if any, on his commercial packages. Federal restrictions are so severe on advertising claims that the producer ignores even the known trace element claims that he could make since that would require a constant and guaranteed percentage of content from all batches and from all plant sources. To comply with Federal Labeling laws the costs of testing and blending would overshadow the anticipated additional revenue that a manufacturer could anticipate by offering a "bonafide complete plant growth fertilizer" even when considering a "premium content" price.

When considering the high value of essential trace element, wood ash becomes equally valuable pound per pound with high quality commercial fertilizers.

After this discussion, my proofreader stated this information was critical and should be inserted in the article.

(Morre Otte's postscript in the Region 3 Bulletin reflected his sense of humor.

.. I WOOD ASH EVERY POSSIBLE PROSPECT TO JOIN THE A.I.S...

### Editor's Comments

Since this article was written 40 years ago, I went out on the web to scour some additional information. Hardwood ashes dissolve readily, acting on the soil pH level. Sixty-eight pounds of wood ashes applied to 1,000 square feet of area raises the pH one-tenth of a point, such as 6.0 to 6.1. Use 33 percent less wood ash in sandy soil and 15 percent more in heavy clay soil. Use half this amount to maintain soil pH<sup>1</sup>. For soil mixes, use 1 cup of wood ashes per bushel. Amend organic compost when it is turned with 1 pound of wood ashes per 200 pounds of compost. Wood ashes are rich in Potash, the very substance that raises the pH of soil, and therefore "sweetens" it<sup>2</sup>. Potassium, a nutrient quickly depleted by irises, is also supplied by wood ashes, which can protect plants from becoming weak and subject to disease. It is worth mentioning that Potash (and Lime, too) is a natural slug- and snail-deterrent. Wood ashes are a great source of phosphorous, the "P" in the "N-P-K" numbers you see on every label of every fertilizer sold today. Although old-timers will often refer to any form of phosphorus as "potash," (because the fertilizer was originally created by burning wood and other plant material in a pot) you have the real potash deal!<sup>3</sup> And because it's a very slow-release mineral, the phosphorus in wood ash remains active in the soil for a long time, so it's not something you should use every season.



And you won't see immediate results; it takes a couple of months for potassium to become available to plants. But it should then keep feeding those plants for at least the next three seasons. Do not use wood ash if the soil pH is 7.0 or higher, as the addition of wood ash further increases the soil pH. Do not use wood ash on plant leaves or directly against the base of plants, or around new plant roots and seedlings during germination, as it has the potential to burn plants. Though one article stated wood acts much like salt and desiccates slugs and snails little bodies. It can be used to smother aphids. Dust a fine layer onto infested plants, coating the aphids. You can hose the ash off the plants once it has done its job.

Unfortunately, wood ash can also be a source of heavy metals such as cadmium, chromium, or lead, which you don't necessarily want in your garden. However, most studies have not shown that if the soil pH is above 6.0, the heavy metals are not taken in by the plants in measurable amounts. And since wood ash raises the soil pH, the presence of heavy metals should not be a problem<sup>4</sup>.

Some sift cooled wood ash and store it in an old metal trash can until the summer and then distribute it with a drop spreader (that's why it is sifted, to remove any large charcoal bits that would clog the spreader).



- 1 <https://homeguides.sfgate.com/type-plants-can-wood-ash-used-on-40365.html>
- 2 <https://www.agardenforthehouse.com/2010/03/wood-ashes-in-the-garden/>
- 3 <https://wtop.com/garden-plot/2018/02/using-wood-ash-garden-lawn-tips/>
- 4 <https://www.thespruce.com/is-wood-ash-good-for-garden-soil-1403126>

## Website News

The website has been changed. It has been re-created with WordPress using Elementor. The cost is half of what it used to be, and WordPress is easy to master. There are many YouTube videos on WordPress and Elementor. Users can be authorized to add or modify content for their respective clubs. Events can be added with ease. The 2021 convention website will also be added next year. Check out [aisregion23.com](http://aisregion23.com).

## Geek Corner

Everyone can attend the AIS electronic board meetings. The AIS Electronic Board meetings are the fourth Wednesday of the month. All meetings start at 6:00 PM in New Mexico. Go to the following website about AIS news and scroll down until you see a link to the next teleconferencing. You can dial in. You can participate in the discussion. However, you can't vote. Only the AIS Board can vote. If you have an item that you want on the meeting's agenda, you can email New Mexican board members Howie Dash at [howiedash@aol.com](mailto:howiedash@aol.com)

<http://www.irises.org/news-events/>

Reports for minutes for the previous AIS board meetings can be found here:

[https://aisboard.org/aisdocs/2020 Board Documents/2020%20Teleconferences/](https://aisboard.org/aisdocs/2020%20Board%20Documents/2020%20Teleconferences/)

## Region 23 Regional Officers and Club Directors

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

Assistant RVP: Steve Kelly [puffincc@msn.com](mailto:puffincc@msn.com)

Secretary: Fran Days [chatmaison@comcast.net](mailto:chatmaison@comcast.net)

Treasurer: Debra Bilberry [dbilberry@gmail.com](mailto:dbilberry@gmail.com)

Membership Chair:

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Newsletter Editor: Scarlett Ayres [sdayres2@aol.com](mailto:sdayres2@aol.com)

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Enchanted Vista Iris Society: Rose McClain Rocky Ford

Mesilla Valley Iris Society: Cynthia Wes [wes-wilson@comcast.net](mailto:wes-wilson@comcast.net)

Pecos Valley Iris Society:

Santa Fe Iris Society:

## American Iris Society News

**Future AIS Conventions Locations:** The 2017 AIS National Convention will be held in Des Moines IA. The 2018 AIS National Convention will be in Louisiana.

## Judges Report by Patricia Randall Judge's Training Chairman

I am happy to announce that our Region 23 Judges are all in good standing. There were several training sessions provided again this year, thanks to our dedicated Region 23 judges, as well as guest judges traveling to New Mexico to provide programs and training as well.

Bonnie Nichols has assumed the position of the Judge's Training Chairman for the American Iris Society. She is replacing Judy Keisling who served in that post for many years. Judy was a great chairman to work with. Am looking forward to working with Bonnie as well.

Plan to get a report to each of the judges later this fall with all of your tabulated 2018-2019 activities.

If there are any judges who did not get their annual activity report to me please do so immediately.

Ann Colwell was moved to a Retired Judge status last year. I had requested that Kathy Palmer and Jim Reilly be moved to the Retired Judge status last year as well, however, not being Master Judges they were not eligible for this transfer. So unfortunately, were removed from the Certified Judges roster. Apprentice Judge Colleen Konetzni has dropped out as a judge. We currently have 17 certified judges and 4 retired judges.

My thanks to all of our judges for their support of AIS and especially their region.

## On the Lighter Side

What do Irises wear under their falls? Underplants.

What is a gardener favorite crime show? Lawn and order.

My wife's a water sign. I'm an earth sign. Together we make mud. - Rodney Dangerfield

## More Irisarian Laws

**Law 30:** Growing prize-winning irises, like a successful marriage, takes love, patience, and lots of work. If you have short knees, grow iris. If you have strong ears, get married.

**Law 31:** The only thing with a beard that looks good in ruffles is an iris.

**Law 32:** A large lawn is wonderful; it means there is lots of room for more iris beds.

**Law 33:** There is no rule in the AIS requiring judges to take eye exams. So, comments on their eyesight are totally inappropriate!

**Law 34:** As Miss Gertrude Stein said, a rose is a rose is a rose. But an iris is something else altogether.

**Law 35:** It's always easy to choose the prettiest iris: it's the one you saw last.

**Law 36:** The fastest way to bring chaos, divisiveness, and dissension into a happy, smoothly run iris club is to start formulating a set of by-laws.

**Law 37:** We must remember the primary purpose of participating in iris shows. It isn't just to win blue, it is also to win Best in Section, to win the Silver Medal, to win Queen of Show, etc.)

**Law 38:** The best way to garden is to put on a wide-brimmed straw hat and some old clothes. And with a hoe in one hand and a cold drink in the other, tell somebody else where to dig. - Texas Bix Bender, Don't Throw in the Trowel

**Law 39:** "A weed is a plant that has mastered every survival skill except for learning how to grow in rows." - Doug Larson

**Law 40:** God made rainy days, so gardeners could get the housework done.

I think there might be some merit in some of these laws. 😊

## Poetry

Here is a short poem written for the 1988 Spring Newsletter by PVIS own Evelyn Siegried.

Springtime  
Colorful Flowers  
Silent is the Iris  
Stately in its Beauty  
People Pause and Smile

Still another poem from the Spring 1988 Region 23 newsletter.

### **He Who Plants the Iris**

He plants an iris, plants beauty  
He who tends it while it grows,  
A radiant throbbing rainbow  
Pleases many as everybody knows.

He who plants the iris, plants splendor;  
Breathless rapture flung across the sod,  
A light to shake the soul and lift the spirit  
Up to the high celestial throne of God.

He who plants the iris, plants triumph;  
Mastering the brown reluctant soil,  
He lifts a last a brave bright showing  
Of beauty, splendor, triumph for his toil.

Iristatically Yours

Scarlett Ayres, editor