

Region 23



American Iris Society

Fall 2011

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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 are permitted provided the source of publication, and the author, are 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 every Spring and Fall. Special news items will be posted as they are received, and will be posted to the newsletter section of our web site.

Due to the time span of no publications, this newsletter will contain news, not so new, as well as the most recent happenings in and around our region.

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: patannran@msn.com. Any comments on format or changes you would like to see implemented, please let me know as well.

Happy reading and ENJOY!!!
Patricia Randall, Region 23 Editor

COVER PHOTO CREDIT: Steve Kelly's seedling: PHEX 09-11

EX-REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



At times it's nice to be an Ex. Over time I've been an Ex- military man, Ex- University Professor, Ex-President of The American Congress on Surveying & Mapping, Ex-President of several companies, and now the Ex-RVP for Region 23 of the American Iris Society. At no time was I thrilled to leave an office or job; an exception being discharged from the U.S. Army.

Region 23 is healthy. The four affiliates are active and taking part in Regional activities. Our biggest challenge is to attract new members, members who will join the American Iris Society.

Being RVP gave me the opportunity to see how AIS works. At the National Conventions I attended the AIS Board Meetings, and that's where things get done. AIS President Dr. E. Roy Epperson passed away during my term of office, as did Sherron Elliott from the Santa Fe Society, and several Region members lost spouses. We need to keep these people in our prayers.

The region has a competent RVP in Fran Day. She started off by submitting the Affiliation report for the region; a task that can be trying. She will chair the Region 23 meeting in Las Cruces in September, and I'm sure she will be attending the National Conventions.

General Douglas MacArthur, in his Farewell speech before the US Congress said "Old Soldiers never die, they just fade away". That's what I'm doing, I'm gradually fading away, but I will see many of you when I judge iris shows and attend Regional Conventions.

Jim Reilly, Ex-RVP

IN LOVING MEMORY

We extend our sympathy to the members of the Santa Fe Iris Society in the loss of Stormy Sandquist this past Spring. Stormy had been a long time member of the group and was well know as a gifted artist and staunch supporter of SFIS special events.

SFIS member Gwen Anlian's husband Ed recently passed away. Please keep Gwen in your prayers.

EVIS and AAIS member Ken Fladager lost both his mother-in-law and father-in-law this past summer. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to him and his wife Valerie.

May God Bless and Comfort all of you and give you Peace. Cherish all the golden memories of your loved ones.

REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings Iris Lovers!

Even though our state had a very strange winter with some of the coldest weather it has seen, our irises once again gave us beautiful blooms. In the north, it was a late bloom season with some late frosts, but once they started blooming, we were not disappointed.

It is hard to believe that the summer is over and fall is here with winter just around the corner. Here in Eldorado, we had our first frost on October 18. Now we are cleaning and planning for those Spring shows.

Scarlett Ayres is the webmaster for our Region 23 site and I would like to give her a gigantic thank you for all the work she has done on the site. It is looking better and better thanks to her efforts.

I would like to welcome a new affiliate to Region 23: Enchanted Vista Iris Society in Rio Rancho. They are off to a roaring start with 25 members and working on their AIS affiliation.

Speaking of AIS, membership has been declining and we would have a huge void if we had no AIS-----no judges, no shows, no awards, no insurance, no convention. Talk up AIS to your members. This year Region 23 has 76 AIS members which is the same number as last year.

AIS is now offering an E-membership but, according to the emails I get, there are still a few bugs to work out.

The AIS affiliation process has been simplified for local societies (and your RVP). In 2012, a flat annual fee of \$25 is required for any society affiliation – no more minimum, maximum or percentages.

I would like to thank the Mesilla Valley Iris Society and Scarlett Ayres, Club President, for the fun and informative Region 23 Convention they gave us September 23-25 in Las Cruces. Club members worked together to share the responsibilities and it showed with a smooth running convention.

Also, thank you to the 21 AIS members who took the time to complete and send the Tall Bearded Symposium ballot to me. I would like to get more participation next year.

Since this was my first year as RVP, I appreciate all the help and support I have gotten from everyone.

Fran Day



HYBRIDIZING --- HOW IT ALL GOT STARTED

Steve Kelly...Las Cruces

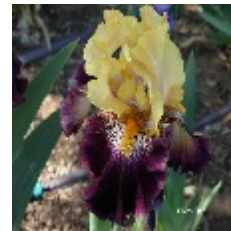
My first attempt at hybridizing was in 2007. I didn't know what I was doing and later found out I was doing it all wrong.....no wonder I never saw a seed pod. I attended the national iris convention in Austin in 2008 and came back all jazzed up and ready to try it again.

Knowing that I had been unsuccessful the prior year, I enlisted Elouise Young from our club to show me how to do it correctly. She has had experience in hybridizing so was able to show me the correct way. There were not many iris still blooming in my yard at this time, but I crossed the few that were left. This resulted in 105 seedlings that were planted in May of 2009 and bloomed for the first time in the Spring of 2010.

The next year I was more selective in my crosses and was able to do more. I planted 207 seedlings that bloomed for the first time in the Spring of 2011.

As a result of our unusually cold February, this past Spring I had very few seeds that sprouted from last year's crosses. They were planted in the ground this May and we will wait until next April to see the results.

This Spring I have made very few crosses as I have run out of room to plant more seedlings. As it is, I have made 6 iris beds (over 1000 square feet) at a friend's home in Dona Ana where all of the seedlings are planted..



Above is a selection of Steve's seedlings.



Steve with his seedlings at the Roswell Show April 2011. He won the "Best Seedling of Show" with his seedling # PBD 09-2.

AND THE WINNERS ARE



The Mesilla Valley Iris Society held it's annual judged iris show at the Ramada Palms de Las Cruces on Saturday, April 16th. The show was judged from 11:00 to 12:30 AM and then was opened to the Public at 1:00 PM. This was a new location for us, as we were unable to use the Mesilla Valley Mall this year due to Easter being late.

The show at the Ramada was held in the Atrium in the center court of the hotel. It was a more natural location than the mall with an area of plants and a rock garden in the atrium. We had more space to spread out our flowers and were able to display our iris flags on the wall for a very appealing visual display. The downside of our new location was that there were two steps you had to go down which was not handicapped accessible and also it was adjacent to the pool, which generated a lot of extra noise.

This year we had 108 different entries in the show, including seedlings and approximately 90 different cultivars. This is close to our normal number of entries, despite a late start to the iris season this year due to the harsh freeze this past February. We were lucky to have more medians and arilbreds this year than normal.



Best Specimen of Show went to Lilly Rawlyk for her first Mesilla Valley Iris Society Show. Her winning entry was "Cup Runneth Over", an arilbred hybridized by Sharon McAllister. Other winners included "Eye For Style" as the Best Tall Bearded presented by Steve Kelly; the Best Historic "Lady Friend" was shown by Scarlett Ayers; Best Seedling of Show honors went to Steve Kelly for his tall l bearded seedling HAD 09-1; Best Median was an intermediate "Galway" shown by Howard Dash; and the Best Border Bearded award was presented to Lilly Rawlyk for her entry "Whoopsidaisy". The sweepstakes honors went to Steve Kelly with 25 blue ribbons won, the runner-up was Howard Dash with 10 blue ribbons.



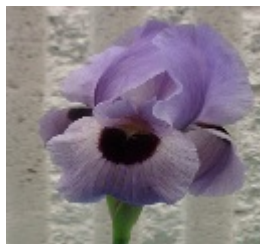
Once the show opened to the public, we were pleased with the turnout despite a new location. MVIS also offered a number of potted irises for sale that sold out very quickly.

The show closed at 5:00 PM, which was followed by a short society business meeting.

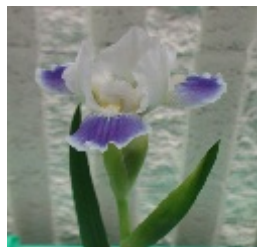
We were very pleased with the show and our day overall !!!

Howie Dash, Show Chairman, Mesilla Valley Iris Society

The Albuquerque Aril & Iris Society's (AAIS) early show was held on April 23, 2011. 'Lancer', an AB OGB, presented by Valerie White, won Best Specimen of Show. Valerie also won the silver medal with 17 blue ribbons. She also won section ribbons in the Arilbred and IB sections. Helen Crotty won a section ribbon in SDBs. Helen Radebaugh won best of TB with 'Grape Echo'. Cindy Rivera won the Bronze with 10 blues. She also won best median of show with 'Naumkeag'. Photos by Norma Riley.



'Lancer'



'Naumkeag'

The AAIS had their annual Mother's Day Show May 7, 2011. Helen Radebaugh won best of section with 'Flirty White Skirts', a MTB. Helen also won the silver medal and a section certificate for 'Sterling Stitch' a TB. Valerie White took the bronze medal and a section certificate for her presentation of, 'Dunshane' a RH. Cindy Rivera won the section certificate in the species section with Iris tectorum 'Woolong'. Linn Furnish won the historic section certificate with 'Blue Sapphire'. Photos by Cindy Rivera.



'Flirty White Skirt'



'Blue Sapphire'



I. tectorum *'Woolong'*

Cindy Rivera, Show Chairman, Albuquerque Aril & Iris Society

The Santa Fe Iris Society hosted their annual show at the DeVargas Mall on Saturday, May 21, 2011 with only 39 entries. The Best Specimen of Show was 'Bewilderbeast' shown by Maggie Rubino. Pat Feather received the Silver Medal for most blue ribbons, and runners-up for the Bronze Medal was Rosemary and John Cain. The Best Design of Show and Artistic Sweepstakes Rosette went to Patricia Copple.

Fran Day, President, Santa Fe Iris Society

***** Sorry.....there was no show report available from the Pecos Valley Iris Society. *****

FROM THE LAND OF ENCHANTMENT Comes the “Enchanted Vista Iris Society”

On Sunday May 15, 2011 thirteen people met at the Rio West Community Church in Rio Rancho for the purpose of organizing a new iris society. The group selected the name of “Enchanted Vista Iris Society”. The EVIS will apply for affiliation status with the American Iris Society in 2012.

We meet the Second Sunday of the months of February through October at 2:00 PM at the Rio West Community Church. The church has graciously offered our group a meeting space free of charge. As a Thank You to the church, we will be sponsoring an iris planting on the church grounds. Irises that have a religious connotation to their name have been purchased, and/or donated for this planting. The irises have been potted and will be planted in the Spring.

We have also been meeting with the Director of the Rio Rancho Parks & Recreation Department to sponsor a Commemorative Iris Planting at the Veteran’s Memorial Park in Rio Rancho. If approved, the planting site will be prepared in the Spring and planted in the fall of 2012. Irises having a patriotic or liberty meaning to their names will be selected, IE: “Lest We Forget” which was introduced by Sutton Gardens in honor of the well known national motto of the Veteran’s Organization.



We held a small members only iris sale in July. Irises were graciously donated to our group by a friend who has discontinued their pursuit in irises. Featured here is Kristen Ikenberg gleefully showing off her purchase of sale irises for her garden.

We held a very successful Iris Raffle at our August meeting as a means of encouraging our group of hobby irisarians to begin their conversion from their unknown irises to named varieties in preparation for future cultivar shows. Over 100 irises were provided by way of two donations for “club orders”, and other donations from commercial gardens and local growers. In the foreground is member Connie Walsh selecting irises for her new garden collection. In the background is Barbara Striegel making her selection.

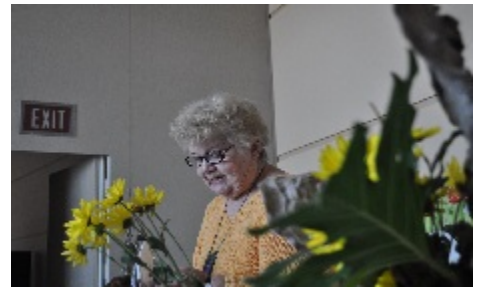


We have enjoyed programs on: “The Iris Family”, “AIS Award Winners”, and a demonstration on the proper way to dig, divide, trim and mark irises.



We sponsored a booth to provide iris information as well as a membership drive at the annual Rio Rancho Mayor’s Sunday is Funday event on August 21st. As a result, we now have 25 members. Shown here is Gerry Seyler and Patricia Randall providing iris information.

We enjoyed a Demonstration and Hands-On Artistic Design Program for our October meeting. Maggie Rubino, a member of the National Council of Garden Clubs and the Santa Fe Iris Society conducted the demonstration and provided tips to the members in the construction of their designs. Several members have expressed an interest in learning the basics of artistic design for participation in our shows, the first of which is being planned for Saturday, May 12, 2012.



Our first year of activities will culminate with our Holiday Party and White Elephant Gift Exchange on Sunday, December 11th, 2:00 PM at the Greens Community Center in Rio Rancho, arrangements for the accommodation was provided by member Phil Doonan.

Patricia Randall, Vice President, Enchanted Vista Iris Society

REGION 23 CONVENTION 2011 NEWS

Scarlett Ayers, President, Mesilla Valley Iris Society



Cindy Rivera gave a presentation on growing arilbreds and described the terminology used to denote the percentage of aril in the arilbreds. Arilbreds are the result of breeding aril irises with the more commonly grown bearded irises. Arils are subdivided into two major subsections: Oncocyclus and Regelia. Oncocyclus bred with bearded irises are labeled as oncobreds (OGB) and regelia bred with bearded irises are labeled regeliabreds (RB). A plus sign (+) denotes more than 50% aril, while a minus sign (-) denotes less than 50% aril. No symbol means that the iris is half aril. So if you see a designation of OGB+, this means that the iris is more OGB than bearded. She suggested that people start with half or quarter aril content irises. If they can keep those alive then they can graduate to three quarter aril content. Though arils are desert plants, pure arils can be tricky to grow. This is because in their

native countries of Israel, Syria, Iraq, Iran and Turkey they don't experience a monsoon like we do in the American Southwest in August. She suggests that if you grow arils or three quarter arilbreds that the top 4 inches of your soil be sand for adequate drainage. Cindy also gave tidbits on how to use arilbreds in the landscaped garden. Arils or three quarter arilbreds tend to lose their leaves in the summer so you want something else to grow there for interest. She showed many beautiful pictures of different types of arilbreds. The arilbreds are diverse in patterns, color and form. The combination of color, patterns, signals and form make these a fun and exciting choice for the irisarian. I think my favorite was Persian Sapphire which had a light blue beard that shows up like a jewel on the darker yellowish-brown falls. Arilbreds don't have the high number of flowers per stalk like the Tall Bearded, however, they are well worth the effort. Note, that the arilbreds will bloom a few weeks earlier than the tall bearded iris. I find they usually bloom about the same time as the SDBs. She ended the presentation by raffling off numerous free arilbreds which was very much appreciated by the audience.

Mesilla Valley Iris Society hosted the 2011 AIS Region 23 convention at the Ramada Palms Hotel September 24-25.

Forty-one people registered to attend the conference. A noted guest was Kathy Chilton, the co-chair of the 2012 national convention who came from as far away as Tuscon, AZ.

Four presenters spoke at the convention on Saturday. First up was Dr. Carol Sutherland who is a part time state entomologist and part time NMSU professor. She customized her presentation on bugs in New Mexico to focus on bugs (including beneficial bugs) that affect irises. Carol gave a very entertaining presentation complete with sound effects. The iris pests in NM are slugs, aphids, scarab beetles and thrips. Five different species of aphids can munch on our favorite plant. Carol said that aphids are female only and give live birth. She mentioned that lady bug larvae will eat aphids but the lady bugs purchased at the store are coming out of hibernation and their first instinct upon waking up is to fly and exercise their wing muscles. This means that though lunch for their larvae may be on the next leaf, the lady bug will probably be flying into town for dinner for the kids. She mentioned that the sticky “honeydew” found on some plants is actually excreted by bugs. The last part of the presentation talked about how to avoid problems pests. The Region 23 web site: aisregion23.com/aisregion23 has her presentation under tutorials.



The second presenter caused quite a stir and much discussion with his presentation. Michael Mele'ndrez, of Soil Secrets of Los Lunas New Mexico discussed the biology of the soil and focused on the effects of Humus and beneficial micro organisms called Mycorrhizae. Mycorrhiza is a beneficial bacterium that exists in a mutualistic relationship with the plants root system. This mutualistic relationship involves the Mycorrhizae penetrating far beyond the root system of a plant in search of water via small microscopic hyphae. The plant provides what the Mycorrhizae need to flourish and the Mycorrhizae help the host plant establishes a healthier, deeper root system that can access many necessary minerals and moisture that it could not reach before. This process allows for a more drought tolerant and much healthier plant. Constructing a house or heavily tilling the soil can destroy the micro-biology and humus of the soil leaving you with the equivalent of

“dead dirt”. Most chemical fertilizers don’t do anything to build up the soil except supply basic nutrients like Nitrogen, Potassium and Phosphorus. Mele'ndrez grows the beneficial microorganisms on roots of plants. Then he digs up the plants roots and extracts the microorganisms and sells it to the public. One pound of pure Mycorrhizae costs about \$100 but goes a long way. He suggests putting a pinch of the stuff on the bottom of an iris rhizome or coating iris seeds. His company coated corn seed and planted a field. He showed comparisons of his field with his neighbor’s field. His field yielded 40% more vegetative matter. Check out his web site at <http://www.soilsecrets.com>. Part of his talk was on humus. Humus is rich in microorganism and can re-establish a healthy soil. He showed numerous examples like caliche soil, and an area with mine tailings and showed a much healthier ecosystem sometimes as little as a month later after application. He stated that healthy alive soil helps the plant find water and minerals.

The scientists in the audience appreciated the Los Alamos generated computer graphic representation of the humic acid molecule and how it can loosely combine with all sorts of minerals to make it available to the plant. An added benefit is that it can sequester carbon out of the atmosphere. Mele'ndrez stressed that just because you are adding compost to the soil does not mean that you are adding humus. Most compost products have only 2 - 3% humic acids. Their Terra Pro Earth Magic product (which also contains Mycorrhizae) and has 92% humus. A gallon of their Terra Pro (Humus) costs about \$27 with 6 cubic foot costing \$106 at Sierra Vista Nurseries in La Union. Sante Fe and Albuquerque can probably go to Soil Secrets place of business in Los Lunas to obtain the product. The Protein Crumbies which he uses as a fertilizer is about half the cost of the Terra Pro and goes twice as far. Michael stated "I am a scientist so I must perform research. I purchase the stuff for testing, and will let you know what happens." Some of the more interesting statements he made are that phosphate will combine with iron to make iron phosphate which cannot be absorbed by plants. I thought that is no big deal, I will just add more bio-solids which are very high in iron. However, Michael doesn't like bio-solids because you just don't know what carcinogenic stuff people poured down their sinks. He also stated that too much bonemeal or excess phosphorus will cause the plant to dissociate itself from the Mycorrhizae. To find out more go to:

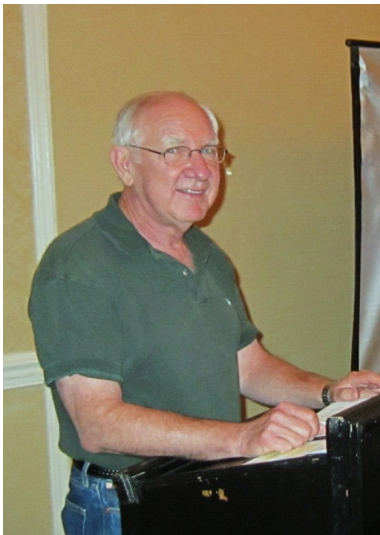
<http://www.soilsecrets.com/Soil%20Ecology%20and%20the%20Soil%20Food%20Web.pdf>.



Jeff Anderson discussed fertilization and focused on the micronutrients. Jeff is a past member of MVIS and is currently the Dona Ana County Agronomy and Horticulture Agent, and is an instructor for the Master Gardeners program. He was a fountain of information, so he definitely knows how to feed our babies. His presentation can be found at: aisregion23.com/aisregion23 web site (under tutorials). He stated that the bio-solids are a good source of micro-nutrients. He suggests applying 2 inches of bio-solids for a new garden and work it into the soil. While a top dressing of 1/4" will help established plants. Apply any time of year. Jeff said that the lack of iron and zinc are the biggest problems in our soils. Zinc deficiency will cause twisted stalks or stunted growth. Other words of wisdom are that Phosphorus moves slowly in some plants, but making the environment a little acidic will help. He showed a chart depicting how the Ph of the soil affects plant uptake of various nutrients. He highlighted the Ph for our alkaline soils and you can see the uptake by plants is slower for phosphorus. Note, that Ironite is filled with heavy metals like Cadmium. Areas that get too cold won't get ammonia converted to nitrate which may lead to ammonia toxicity. He also warned us to be careful with manure because they are high in salts. Apply early and water in.

He suggests sending your soil to Swat Labs of NMSU. In order to submit samples to Swat Labs, the client must first obtain the proper forms. This can be accomplished either through accessing the Swat Labs web server at swatlab.nmsu.edu or by contacting the Swat Lab main office at (575) 646 4422 and requesting the appropriate forms. SWAT Office is at 2990 Knox St, PGEL Bldg West Entrance on the main campus of NMSU right next to Gerald Thomas Hall.

Jeff also showed us a Mulder chart of the nutrients. The Mulder chart shows interrelationships amongst certain elements in plant growth. For example a plant deficient in one nutrient may cause deficiencies in other nutrients. Surprisingly, the opposite is true. Excess of some nutrients can drive deficiencies in other nutrients. Every element in a nutrient solution influences the others, and balance must be maintained between all nutrients, if healthy, efficient growth is to take place. If you refer to the Mulder chart in his presentation on the region23 website, where any two red arrows pointing toward each other nutrient tie up can occur like iron (Fe) and phosphate (P). This is called antagonism. This relates back to Michael's statement that adding phosphate to soil may bind up the iron to make iron phosphate which can't be taken up by plants. Two green arrows pointing away from each, like between potassium (K) and magnesium (Mg) means that both elements work together to increase each others uptake into the plant (synergy). The red line with an arrow pointing just at Copper (Cu) indicates that the plant has a harder time taking up Cu when Phosphorus increases in the soil. With higher levels of K, both Manganese (Mn) and Fe are taken up into the plant easier (requiring less of a presence in the medium).



Guest speaker and judges trainer was world renowned iris hybridizer Paul Black of Mid-America Gardens in Oregon. He showed many pictures from his fields of irises. They looked like a patchwork quilt. He discussed all aspects of Mid America Gardens from planting to harvesting and how he treats the rhizomes for shipping. He also discussed his search for the smaller flowered tall bearded iris. His goal is to develop an iris with many small flowers per stalk instead of fewer larger flowers.

Paul also gave the judges presentation on Sunday. The message was "grow it and know it". He strongly believes, you just can't judge irises for the medals by viewing them in display gardens or at the national convention.

You must see how it grows in your area. Many examples were shown from his seedling patch. The audience was asked to judge the quality of the seedlings and which seedlings should be kept. Note that these pictures only showed seedlings when they weren't blooming. The audience was asked to judge the seedlings based solely on the health and vigor of the plant.

MESILLA VALLEY IRIS SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT

Garden Tour: The Mesilla Valley Iris Society (MVIS) had their annual garden tour on April 10th. The tour included the gardens of Cynthia and Wes, Ann, Howie and Lily. The tour ended with lunch at Cynthia and Wes's beautiful historic garden.

Home and Garden Show: Scarlett Ayres gave an iris presentation to the High Hopes Garden Club in June and at the Home and Garden Show on March 12. MVIS voted to sponsor a booth at the Las Cruces annual Home and Garden Show. The organizers put us at the first table (or the last depending upon your viewpoint). We thought it was great exposure for the club. The club voted to have a 3 foot by 8 foot banner made for the club. Cost was about \$100.

Show: The Easter Bunny kicked us out of the mall this year so we formed a committee (Carole Pierce, Steve Kelly and Howie Dash) to examine other alternatives. The show was held in the atrium of the Ramada Palms hotel. The members exhibited TBs, ABs and medians for a total of 99 different cultivars. Steve Kelly won a bronze medal for his educational exhibit. Other awards presented were for: Best Tall Bearded, '*EYE FOR STYLE*', Steve Kelly; Best Historic, '*LADY FRIEND*', Scarlett Ayres; Best Arilbred and Best Specimen of Show, '*CUP RUNNETH OVER*', Lilly Rawlyk; Best Seedling, Tall Bearded, '*HAD-0-3*', Steve Kelly; Best Median, Intermediate Bearded, '*GALWAY*', Howie Dash; Best Border Bearded, '*WHOOPSIDaisy*', Lilly Rawlyk. Jim Reilly and others potted up around 100 irises in the fall for the sale at the show. They went like hotcakes.

Guest Speaker: We invited Sharon McAllister to give a presentation on Arils and Arilbreds during the February meeting. Sharon showed many pictures of Arilbreds hybridized right here in New Mexico. She also discussed classification and general care.

Facebook and Blog: Shannon Hiatt set up a blog spot on <http://mesillavalleyirissociety.blogspot.com/> which includes a report by Steve Kelly on hybridizing. Kristee West set up a facebook page for the club.

Check us out at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Mesilla-Valley-Iris-Society/178453918836025?v=wall>.

Club Iris: The club bought the club irises this year from Thomas Burseen. The Irises were handed out at the August meeting.

Club Business: The club decided to protect peoples email address by sending out blind carbon copies (Bcc) when email notices are sent out. Everyone will still have a hard copy of the club's phone numbers and email addresses.

We decided that the previous system of awarding points to people who attended meetings and worked the sale, shows and digs was too unwieldy. The idea was that people who received the most points got first dibs on the club irises. Unfortunately, people who were co-hosts, or worked on other issues for the club did not get points for these endeavors. Therefore, we decided that people just needed 10 points to receive a club iris.

We will go back to the old way of pulling names out of a hat for those persons with 10 points. This relieves some of the stress on the person who tallies the points.

Everyone is encouraged to grow the club irises bought by the club and bring back the increases (called club iris increases) to the club for disseminating to club members. However, people often forget which of their irises are club irises. Therefore, a list will be sent out yearly reminding everyone of the iris they need to return to the club.

We decided to set a cut off time that members can bring irises to be cleaned and marked for the annual rhizome sale. Cleaning starts Saturday on Labor Day weekend and ends Monday. The cutoff day and time is Sunday at noon.

Life member, Herb Lagerfeld died January 30th after a fairly brief illness. He was 98, and had had a very interesting life. He was born in Portland, Oregon but was taken to Germany by his mother when she and his father divorced. Germany did not allow single mothers to raise children, so Herb grew up in an orphanage. By age 18 he was working in a hotel where Hitler stayed, though Herb didn't meet him. When he was drafted into the army, friends smuggled him out of the country. He eventually ended up in Hawaii where he met Lillian. They both worked for the Dole Pineapple Company. Close friends moved to Las Cruces and persuaded them to follow in 1987. Herb and Lillian joined the MVIS in the mid 90's, and were enthusiastic and active members for several years. The last meeting Herb and Lillian attended was in February 2009. Herb was legally blind, but they continued until age and illness forced them to curtail their gardening activities. Lillian passed away September 2010 at age 88. She was born in Honolulu.

Scarlett Ayers, President, Mesilla Valley Iris Society

FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH ----- OR NOT

FINALLY-----FINALLY-----FINALLY-----the long overdue Region 23 Newsletter has come to fruition. I sincerely thank all of you who took time out of your busy schedules to get me your show reports, and to Scarlett who provided the fantastic run down on all the happenings and guest speakers at our annual Region 23 Convention in September. Many thanks go to all of the convention committee members and all their hard work in getting the event organized-----you all did a fantastic job and was enjoyed by all of us who were fortunate to attend.

Roswell presented the invitation to attend next year's annual convention. They will be looking into ways to shorten the length of the event by incorporating some of the usual Saturday agenda into the Friday evening schedule following the welcome pot luck. They will also be looking at the possibility of moving the judges training up to the Saturday schedule. This would allow the convention to conclude following the Saturday evening banquet and iris auction. It will be interesting to see how this is accomplished, but if anyone can do it-----the Pecos Valley Iris Society group will figure out a way to do it!

These changes were the direct result of the idea of holding our conventions only every other year. Many attendees were not in favor of this idea, they were of the opinion that our conventions could run the risk of falling to the way side over the course of time if we selected this option.

I would also like to take this time to welcome some new members from this region, as well as some new New Mexico members from other parts of the country. They are: Christia Causbie and Pia Louchios from Las Lunas; Howard Dash, Lily Rawlyk and Margaret Ritter from Las Cruces; Melanie Deason, Phelps and Corina White from Roswell; Cynthia White from Dona Ana; Yarrow Pressburg from Cerrillos; Frederik Kellogg from Rio Rancho; Troy Hunt from Hobbs; and Kay Snead from Odessa, Texas.

And, also, a big thank you to Steve Kelly for his super article on hybridizing. It has been a real pleasure receiving pictures of his babies over the course of the summer months. I very judiciously saved them for incorporation into this newsletter publication. Keep up the good work Steve, and by all means, keep us informed of your progress. Looking forward to seeing your beauties on the market in future years. Scarlett Ayers has begun dibbling in the art of hybridizing as well. The photo of her “first” baby will be featured on the cover of the Spring 2012 newsletter.

I hope all of the reading public will be willing to utilize some of the calmer months over the winter and prepare an article for inclusion in the Spring 2012 newsletter as well. It is so very exciting to see what is moving and shaking within our region and who’s who in the moving and shaking!!!.

The compilation of the Regional newsletter is usually a labor of love, however, my Word Perfect program that I’ve always used in the past decided to ignore some of my page set up options, which is quite evident in of some of the articles. It was not recognizing the line spacing of those articles that I copied from email attachments(bummer). I guess it is high time that I invest in a software program geared for the production of professional publications (such as newsletters). It will be a real challenge to learn the functions of another program. Wish me lots of luck!

And last, but not least, I hope you will welcome the new Enchanted Vista Iris Society into the realm of our region. Several of the members are Master Gardeners, and talk about movers and shakers-----they have been planning several community projects for spreading the beauty of our flower around the area by means of iris plantings. We will keep you posted on those events as they unfold.



I send best wishes to all of our regional AIS members.

I hope you all had a wonderful **Thanksgiving**,
and I wish each of you a very blessed **Holiday Season**.

Iristatically Yours,
Patricia Randall
Region 23 Newsletter Editor