

# AIS Region 23 Newsletter New Mexico



Covid may have prevented club activities, but we could still garden.

September 2021

2021

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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](mailto: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, Eva Barry



**Figure 1 Eva Barry, RVP**

Welcome Region 23 members to our second On-Line Region 23 Regional Convention for 2021. It has been a difficult 12 months since we had our last regional convention. All of us had to cancel once again our Spring Flower Shows, COVID-19 restrictions got tighter and are finally starting to loosen up, deal with the release of the vaccines and decision to or not to get immunized, being required to “Wear a Mask” and now deciding whether to continue wearing a mask for those of us vaccinated due to the Delta variant of COVID, or not. One good thing is that New Mexico has started to finally open so we can start to get back to all our various meetings, gatherings, and activities we have missed since March 2020. Our drought has increased due to the lack of moisture during the winter and spring, but our beautiful irises are still blooming and spreading joy to all who have been able to see them. Thank you to everyone who shared their photos on various Facebook sites as well as club sites. I know I saw so many beautiful ones that everyone has been growing. Now we are beginning to “Dig and Divide” our iris in preparation for our annual rhizome sales.

All our clubs as well as AIS carried over the membership dues paid in 2020 to extend through 2021 which was wonderful. Our clubs have been gaining new members as well as losing a few here and there. Memberships to AIS for Region 23 have increased slightly but it would be nice if more club members would consider joining AIS and take advantage of all the additional information provided to members. To join AIS, simply go to the AIS website “[Irises.org](http://Irises.org)” and click on “Join.” AIS is still providing a \$25.00 voucher certificate acceptable by several nurseries to any new member of AIS, or for any current member who upgrades membership from a single membership to a triennial or to a dual membership, or an E-member who upgrades to multiple years of E-membership.

With the “stay at home” restrictions and not being able to meet, I am hoping we haven’t lost very many of our members due to the pandemic. I have heard from a couple clubs that the efforts to contact all their members has been difficult. (Phone calls, messages, and emails unanswered.) And attendance at meetings has dropped significantly. I have also heard and experienced clubs gaining new members once things are starting to open and club activities begin to resume. Your clubs need your attendance and participation in their meetings and activities.

Thanks to Scarlett Ayres (and our MVIS members, Region 23 Secretary, & new AIS board member) we have held a couple of great activities. In December the Region held an “Ugly Christmas Sweater” contest following our brief regional meeting and two

Sutton iris gift certificates were awarded. The winner of the Ugly Christmas Sweater and \$50.00 gift certificate was given to Monty Bilberry from SFIS and the runner up and most decorated sweater's \$25.00 gift certificate was given to Isabel Olsen from PVIS. In March, Scarlett put together an activity for members to play "Dykes Winners' Bingo." Scarlett generated unique bingo cards with names of Dykes Medal Iris winners randomly placed on the bingo cards which were sent to those members who were interested in playing. Following our brief regional meeting, two games were played. The winners of the 2021 Introductions certificates donated by Howie Dash from MVIS were awarded to Isabel Olsen from PVIS for the first game. In the second game Barbara Mann from SFIS and Colleen Konetzni from EVIS got bingo at the same time, so both got a certificate. Even though attendance was very low for both activities, those who attended had a great time.

Our eagerly awaited 101st National American Iris Society's Convention will finally be held in Las Cruces, NM April 11-16, 2022. Be sure to mark your calendars and plan to attend this event. With it being in New Mexico for the first time ever, it is a great opportunity for all our regional members to attend your first National Convention, without having to pay the big expense of airfare, which is a big savings. More detailed information is being provided in this packet and during the Zoom virtual convention on Thursday, August 19, 2021, starting at 7:00 pm. I have purchased my own Zoom account and will be hosting the convention to prevent any spontaneous ending of our meeting like what had happened last year. I am very pleased to announce that we will be having Jill Bonino as a guest speaker. She will present a short program on "Colors and Patterns of Iris." (See her Bio elsewhere in this booklet.) We are excited to have her speak at our Regional Convention and look forward to her program.

Did you know AIS has held 15 webinars of which 4 had Judge's Training included? For those of you who may have missed any, here is the list of webinars that have been held. Unfortunately, not all of them have been recorded by AIS so only some are available to view on the AIS You Tube site. They are:

Webinar 2: "Novelty Irises: Broken Colors and Flatties" by Bonnie Nichols with judge's training.

Webinar 4: "Novelty Irises: Space Agers Part 2" by Bonnie Nichols with judge's training.

Webinar 5: "Species Iris" by Jody Nolin with judge's training

Webinar 6: "Growing Iris Basics, Part 1: Bearded Iris" by Bonnie Nichols

Webinar X: "Beardless Iris" by Jody Nolin

Webinar 7: “Growing Iris Basics, Part 2” by Jody Nolin

Webinar 8: “The Philosophy & Methods of Discovering and Naming New Species” by Prof. Carol Wilson PhD.

Webinar 9: “Our desire for order: historical taxonomic understanding of Iris” by Carol Wilson PhD.

Webinar 10: “Growing Aril and Arilbred Iris” by Howie Dash

Webinar 11: “Managing Pests and Weeds in the Iris Patch” by Bob Hollingsworth

Webinar 12: “Exploring the Iris Encyclopedia” by Bob Hollingsworth

Webinar 13: “Louisiana Irises: The Wild and the Tamed” by Patrick O’Connor

Webinar 14: “Two Worlds – One Iris. A look at the Past, Present, and Future of the Siberian Iris” by Patrick Spence

Webinar 15: “Spuria Irises for Every Garden. A Little History, a Lot of Beauty” by Anne Cadd

Webinar 16: “Tall Bearded Iris Today and Tomorrow” by Jill Bonino with judge’s training

Webinar 17: “Preview of the 2022 National Convention at Las Cruces, New Mexico” by Howie Dash and Scarlett AyresClub News

## **Albuquerque Aril and Iris Society (AAIS)**

Submitted by Eva Barry, AAIS President, [eva13barry@gmail.com](mailto:eva13barry@gmail.com)

AAIS finished up 2020 on a positive note with a very successful rhizome sale held in the parking lot at the Albuquerque Garden Center. We had over 150 varieties of rhizomes for sale along with some potted iris plants. Attendance was good and everyone was happy to comply with the mask requirement and social distancing. Several people took membership applications and a couple new members joined in September.

September, we had another successful member iris plant raffle of iris ordered from Superstition Gardens outside the Garden Center under shady trees to keep us cool. A couple people were unable to attend so they submitted their wish list and money to Eva and were happy with the plant(s) they received. We didn’t hold a formal meeting due to COVID restrictions so election of officers for 2021 was not done.

December, several members participated in the “Ugly Christmas Sweater” contest that was hosted by Region 23. Scarlett Ayres came up with the contest idea as an activity

the regional members could participate in and see each other after being apart for so long due to COVID.

January, notices were sent out via email to the membership for nominations for 2021 officers since we didn't have a meeting in September. Nominations were closed and then voted on by membership was done by email. After Eva received back votes from more than a quorum of members, the following individuals were elected: Eva Barry, President, vacancy for Vice President, Linn Furnish, Treasurer, and Rae Phillips, Secretary. Helen Crotty, past president serves on the Board (ex-officio).

AIS extended the affiliation dues paid for 2020 to cover 2021 as did AAIS with the club membership. AAIS did have to pay the required \$7.00 fee to the Garden Center for each member as well as pay for the Contract Sustaining (Membership) Fee to the Council of Albuquerque Garden Clubs, the building key fee for access, and the Region 23's annual donation of \$250.00 along with storage building and insurance coverage for another year.

In February, it was decided that Eva would divide the 2020 introduction iris purchased for the 2020 convention (for the live auction) that she had been growing, saving 1 rhizome of each to be given to attendees at the 2022 convention at registration and pot the remaining rhizomes to use for the club raffle in September instead of ordering more plants. We did receive notification from a couple members that they wanted to discontinue membership with AAIS and were sorry to lose them.

Several of the AAIS members attended both of the Region 23 Zoom meetings, The "Ugly Christmas Sweater" contest in December, and the "Dykes Winners' Bingo in March. Those who attended thought them great fun. Thanks goes to Scarlett Ayres for her hard work in setting these up for us.

Our first Club Newsletter, prepared by Rae Phillips, was sent out via email (and USPS to members without email) on April 8, 2021. (Newsletters continued through the rest of the year.)

April 23-24, 2021 AAIS participated in the Albuquerque Garden Center's Plant Sale and Garden Fair. We had over 100 pots of iris donated by Eva Barry and Talia Michelle



which sold like hot cakes! We also sold 25 bags of Iris fertilizer. The sale was to run for 2 days but we sold out in less than 4 hours. We had a previous member come to help with the sale and rejoined the club.

May 8th, Eva gave an In-Garden Judges Training and garden tour of her iris gardens for all AAIS members at her home. Only 5 people attended, 3 of which were visitors and who joined AAIS following the garden tour. Another update to our roster was done and sent out to the membership adding 8 new members to

the club! Many of our member's blooms were shared by posting them on our Facebook site.

In July we held our 1<sup>st</sup> in-person meeting for 2021. Only 8 of our 43 members (3 officers, 4 new members and 1 long time member) showed up. We are still trying to recruit a Vice President. We provided our members with information on How to Dig and Divide Iris for the rhizome sale.

August 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> we will be digging iris at the Garden Center that have been long overdue to divide. Our Annual Rhizome Sale is scheduled for August 14<sup>th</sup> (same day as SFIS rhizome sale).

Receiving the request from MVIS, AAIS has agreed to donate refreshments and water at one of the host gardens during the AIS National Convention next April in Las Cruces.

My concerns to everyone in Region 23 is how we can better get all our original members back to attending and participating in our meetings now that many have been fully vaccinated and the state is opening up. Unfortunately, we really didn't do a very good job of keeping in communication with our membership during the "stay at home" time. Fortunately, we continued to gain several new members who are eager to learn more about Irises and our club.



Many of us posted pictures of our gardens either on the AAIS Facebook site (Albuquerque Aril and Iris Society group and page) or their individual Facebook site, and/or on our website [albuquerquearilandirissociety.com](http://albuquerquearilandirissociety.com).

2022 is going to be a very busy year for us with the National AIS 101st Anniversary Convention in Las Cruces April 11<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>, then holding our Spring Flower Show April 24<sup>th</sup>, in addition to preparation for hosting the 2022 Region 23 Convention in Albuquerque August 20-21, 2022.

### **Enchanted Vista Iris Society (EVIS)**

Submitted by Mary Moon EVIS President

Enchanted Vista Iris Society has been able to stay active in spite of Covid. We held our first meeting of the year at Eva Barry's home in May. She presented a Judge's Training on Garden Judging. It was wonderful to be together and to see the beautiful blooms. A true inspiration and her training was very informative. This was our first meeting since March 2020 so there were considerable decisions to be made. We had already determined that again a show would not be feasible, but we began planning for a sale.

We had our next meeting July 11<sup>th</sup> at Ken Fladager's home, for the purpose of his presenting a program and judges training on Louisiana Irises. However, the meeting, where we finalized plans for our annual iris sale, took much longer than anticipated as we also talked about how each of our iris gardens did this year. We then toured Ken's beautiful garden. He will present a judge's training on Louisiana Irises in the future.

Our Annual Sale on July 31<sup>st</sup> was very successful. We enjoyed meeting many community folks and even gained a new member.

We were able to keep up caring for the Veterans Memorial Garden in Rio Rancho. Patricia Randall and her daughter dug up the garden, divided, cleaned, and potted a huge number of rhizomes for the sale. They will be replanting the bed once they've had time to prepare soil.

The Acquisition program is in its second year now and we hope to begin having some offerings for future sales.

There will be a meeting and Potluck on August 8, and our Annual Iris Raffle; always a highlight in the year.

We look forward to continuing with meetings in September and October and our Christmas party in December.

Of course, the anticipation builds in looking forward to the 2022 AIS Convention to be held in Las Cruces!!! We will be providing snacks and bottles of water at one of the gardens and I'm sure we will be helping MVIS in other ways too. Kristen Ikenberg has been working on the most beautiful quilt blocks for a quilt to be raffled at the Convention. Members have joined her now on the project and someone will be a very lucky winner.

Irises are so resilient and our members have certainly faced numerous challenges and our teamwork and friendship are what keep us going. Best wishes to all of the Region 23 Irisarians.

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

Submitted by Cynthia Wilson, MVIS President, [wes-wilson@comcast.net](mailto:wes-wilson@comcast.net)

The Mesilla Valley Iris Society began the year 2021 with a great deal of optimism. After all, this is its 50th year. If Gus survived his heart attack to found the MVIS, we surely could weather a pandemic.

In January it became clear that we would not be planning an iris show for 2021. The president organized the committee chairs and hoped for the best.

February 24, we made Chuck Colwell a Life Member for past and continuing contributions to MVIS.

The Board of Directors met by Zoom to amend the bylaws to add electronic meetings.

Our first MVIS Electronic (Zoom) meeting was held on March 21st. At this meeting we reported that the Iris Show was cancelled and there were no potted iris. Our garden tours were cancelled because of state restrictions on meetings.

Dale Ellis has spent many hours videoing member contributions for the 50th MVIS celebration, an ongoing project.

Our program was "Spring Garden Cleanup" given by Wes Wilson.

May- D. Boyle our Club Iris chair ordered the 2021 Club iris from Sutton Iris Garden.

June – Howie Dash and Scarlett Ayres gave an AIS webinar to promote the AIS 2022 Convention.

June and July - Summer Vacation.

August 15 - Will be our first face to face meeting in many months. I'm sure this will be very exciting. D. Boyle our Club Iris chair is heading up the program, giving out the Club Iris, and managing the increase returns from our members.

August and September - Happy to report that the Big Dig will be at the Wilson's August 31, September 1, 2, 3. David Arroyo and Bob Pountney are leading this activity. Jacquie Pountney is leading the Rhizome Sale. Sale dates are September 11 and 12 at the mall.

October - Nominating Committee selected. November - Annual Election of officers.

December - Holiday Party, 50th celebration and Installation of new Officers.

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

Submitted by Isabel Olsen, PVIS President.

Pecos Valley Iris Society (PVIS) has 17 members. The officers are: President- Isabel Olsen, Vice President- Pat Krakauskas, Treasurer- Yukie Ebara Pfeuffer and Secretary Peggy Voigt. Due to the unfortunate continuation of the COVID-19 virus pandemic, it has been challenging to gather for meetings.

We did have a successful Rhizome Sale in September 2020 at the Chaves County Courthouse lawn during the Farmers Market. We met an enthusiast Iris grower who joined our society. In October we met at our new meeting location, Anderson Museum of Contemporary Art. Patricia Randall, Region 23 Judges Training Chairman, presented the power point "Knowing What an Iris Judge Is Looking For" along with a judges training.

We continue maintaining the two large planters in front of the Chaves County Courthouse and planted some companion flowers to go along with the Iris that were there. Keep Chaves County Beautiful committee members commend PVIS for the beautiful planters and our community involvement.

We continue to display postcards with PVIS information where ever we can for public exposure and to increase interest and membership. Social media has been another tool utilized to communicate with members and the public via Facebook.

In May our members took a trip to the Hondo Iris Farm where member Pegi Smith presented a garden judges training for us. Region 23 Vice President, Eva Barry and her sister Mary were our special guest. We plan to meet in September and continue with informative presenters and hope we can get back to some normalcy.

A few of our members have enjoyed the webinars that American Iris Society has provided us and we look forward to the AIS National Convention 2022 in Las Cruces, and assisting with hospitality and the table decorations.

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

Submitted by Anne Curley, SFIS Treasurer

Following a year (2020) of little activity with only one meeting (Feb 2020), 2021 has not been much more active due to the continued pandemic.

Fran & Henry Day & I called for a meeting outdoors at the Cornell Iris Garden at the park on June 6, 2021 after surveying members about Covid concerns. It was good to catch up. We did not have our usual show in the spring but we felt we could handle a sale as things were opening up & the Santa Fe area has a high vaccination rate.

Digging our iris at the garden is scheduled for August 8 & the sale will be August 14. There have been no other meetings & little communication otherwise.

There is no season ending potluck scheduled yet.

Hoping 2022 brings us a healthier & more positive year & we can resume normal activities.

## **Region 23 News**

### **Region 23 Regional Officers and Club Directors**

RVP (executive): Eva Barry [eva13barry@gmail.com](mailto:eva13barry@gmail.com)

Assistant RVP: Jacquie Pountney, [jacquelinepountney@yahoo.com](mailto:jacquelinepountney@yahoo.com)

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

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

Membership Chair:

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

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

**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.

## **AIS Region 23 2022 Annual Honorary Awards**

Hello Region 23 Members,

I am asking you to look at the great members of your societies and pick out a member or two you think rises above and beyond the norm in assisting all of you with the running of your society, making sure everything gets accomplished, over, said and done.

All of our Society members are great members, helping to serve us in many duties and accomplishments. However, you all have an exceptional member(s) in your group that meets the merits listed above, so I am asking you to email me at [patannran@hotmail.com](mailto:patannran@hotmail.com) with your nominations. I am asking for two nominations this year as we will not be holding the 2021 convention as planned, but will be holding the regional convention again next year. Therefore, I would like to have a nominee for this year and next year as well so we can move forward and be ready for the 2022 Awards Ceremony, and getting caught up with the honorees through 2022, when we can once again cycle back to the normal yearly nominations.

We usually have a member eligible for the Distinguished Service Award as there is always someone who needs to be honored by our members.

As we gain new hybridizers so rarely, we have already honored our past and present hybridizers. In nominating a candidate for the Hybridizer's Award, we want someone who has been hybridizing for several years and is introducing their new irises into commerce.

As for the Distinguished Service Award we like to not only honor someone who is very devoted to everything irises, not only locally but regionally as well, and any service nationally is just the icing on the cake. If you have a great couple that meets these requirements you can nominate both of them as the recipient of one joint award.

**Please include some notations for why you are nominating your special member(s), their accomplishments, etc.**

**I need you to get me your nominations by the end of September of this year.** The awards can be purchased ahead of time and be ready for the convention next August 2022. Listed below are those Region 23 members who have received our prestigious awards in the past years.

The past Hybridizer Award Winners have been: Howard Shockey, Luella and Henry Danielson, Pete McGrath, Sharon McAllister, Steve Kelly and Howard Dash.

The past Distinguished Service Award Winners have been: Barbara Figge, Maxine Perkins, Floyd Stoppani, Ann Colwell, Karen Bergamo, Patricia Randall, Jim Reilly, Reita and Scott Jordan, Cindy Rivera, Pat Feather, Pegi Blackwell-Smith, Phil Doonan, Fran and Henry Day, Rosemary and John Cain, Debra Bilberry and Eva Barry.

I sincerely THANK YOU for your nominations and hope you can join me next year in the presentation of these awards.

Iristatically Yours,

Patricia Randall,

Region 23 Awards Chairman

If you are unable to email your nominations, you can mail them to me at:

758 Hood Road, SE Rio Rancho, New Mexico 87124

## **2022 AIS National Convention Report to be held in Las Cruces, NM**

**By Scarlett Ayres, [sdayres2@aol.com](mailto:sdayres2@aol.com)**

The second century of the American Iris Society starts in New Mexico. AIS celebrated its 100th birthday in 2020. In the first 100 years of the American Iris Society, there has never been a convention in New Mexico. Now the first one in the second century is in southern NM.

Originally scheduled for April 2021, participants will be able to celebrate in the great American Southwest and experience our western, Spanish, and Native American heritage. Mesilla Valley Iris Society (MVIS) is taking care of the convention iris beds for another year. A fact made difficult by excessive rains and health problems for some members. MVIS asked the Master Gardeners to help with weeding the beds and to help at the convention itself. The Master Gardeners need to put in 50 volunteer hours a year. They can help with the convention beds to work off some of their hours. Scarlett Ayres became a Master Gardener this year. For her class project, she created a short presentation on Arilbred irises. Then, the following week she created a presentation on Novelty Irises to present at the first Master Gardener meeting since the pandemic began. Several attendees now want to learn how to hybridize! She also advertised the upcoming sale of MVIS rhizomes September 11-12.

Club president, Cynthia Wilson found out about a government program to pay high-school graduates minimum wage to work for non-profits for 20 hours a week. We put in for several students to help with the gardens as well as craft projects for the convention. The kids worked with different MVIS members at the convention tour different gardens. It is too hot most days to work much past mid-morning, so we had them work on projects for the convention which can be done indoors so they can make their 20-hour workweek. Ayiana is one of the students working in the garden. Her family has a flower garden, so club members have been giving her flowers and teaching her about irises. She has also taught us. During a discussion about pollen, she informed us that she is part Native American (Navajo and Mescalero Apache). Her father uses flower pollen to bless her. Pollen might be applied like a Catholic holy cross, placed on the earlobes to prevent bad whisperings or nightmares, or placed on the feet to guide their way. Pollen is also applied on special days like Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's.

MVIS is currently determining the registration fee. We had to wait for some businesses to establish normal operations. We will need help at the convention and later in July when it is time to dig up the bounty!

- We have Master Gardeners who will volunteer to assist in the tour gardens and registration desk. They should have an irisarian from the region to help.
- Could each club find a goody for the goody bag?
- Bus captains (have 3 from the region, several from national, need a few more)
- Need each club to take responsibility for snacks and water in one garden. AAIS, EVIS, and PVIS have agreed to help
- Need help manning the registration desk, boutique, and silent auction.
- Get the word out about the boutique

Can also use people to fill the following positions

- Hospitality Chairman
- Decorations-Other
- Publicity Chairman
- Tour Garden Chairman
- Lunches Coordinator
- Sponsors

## Tentative Agenda, 2022 AIS National Convention, Las Cruces, NM

### Monday, April 11, 2022

TIME	EVENT
4:00pm - 7:30pm	Registration

9:00am - 4:00pm AIS Silent Auction & Boutique (Setup)  
6:00pm - 11:00pm AIS Board of Directors Meeting

### **Tuesday, April 12, 2022**

TIME	EVENT
9:00am - 7:00pm	Registration
8:00am - 3:00pm	Optional Tour (tentative) White Sands Missile Range/War Eagles Air Museum (Buses load at 7:30am)
9:00am - 4:00pm	AIS Storefront
9:00am - 10:00am	Reblooming Iris Society Board Meeting
12:00pm - 3:00pm	AIS Silent Auction & Boutique (Setup)
1:00pm - 2:00pm	AIS Sections & Cooperating Society Meeting
3:00pm - 6:00pm	AIS Silent Auction & Boutique (Open)
3:30pm - 5:00pm	RVP Board of Counselors Meeting (All RVP's)
5:00pm - 6:00pm	AIS Judges Training Chairpersons Meeting
6:00pm - 10:00pm	AIS Board of Directors Meeting

### **Wednesday, April 13, 2022**

TIME	EVENT
8:00am - 6:00pm	Registration
8:00am - 9:00am	HIPS Program
9:00am - 10:00am	Welcome for First Time Attendees
9:00am - 4:00pm	AIS Storefront
9:00am - 10:00am	Aril Society International Program
10:00am - 11:00am	Median Iris Society Program
11:00am - 12:00pm	Spuria Iris Society Program
12:00pm - 6:00pm	AIS Silent Auction & Boutique (Open)
12:00pm - 1:00pm	Reblooming Iris Society Program
1:00pm - 2:00pm	Society for Japanese Irises Society Program
2:00pm - 3:00pm	Novelty Iris Society Program
3:00pm - 4:00pm	Society for Louisiana Irises Program
4:00pm - 5:00pm	Dwarf Iris Society Program



4:30pm - 6:30pm	Bus Captains Meeting
5:00pm - 6:00pm	Photography: How-To Register Images
5:00pm - 6:30pm	AIS Foundation Meeting
5:30pm - 6:30pm	Youth Reception
6:00pm - 7:00pm	No Host Reception-Cash Bar
7:00pm - 9:00pm	Welcome Banquet - Celebrating 100 years of AIS/50 years of MVIS

### **Thursday, April 14, 2022**

TIME	EVENT
8:00am - 8:30am	Registration
8:45am - 3:00pm	Garden Tours - Blue J Iris/Calhoun Flower Farm (Busses load 8:15am)
3:30pm - 4:30pm	Bus Captains Meeting
4:00pm - 5:00pm	Society for Siberian Irises Program
5:00pm - 6:00pm	Youth Gathering
6:00pm - 7:00pm	TBIS Program
6:00pm - 8:00pm	AIS Storefront
4:00pm - 8:15pm	AIS Silent Auction & Boutique (Open)
8:15pm	AIS Silent Auction & Boutique (Closes)
8:30pm - 10:00pm	Judges Training - Awards and Ballots

### **Friday, April 15, 2022**

TIME	EVENT
7:00am	AIS Silent Auction Winning Bids Posted
8:00am - 8:30am	Registration
9:00am - 2:45pm	Garden Tours - NM Farm and Ranch Museum/NM State University Fabian Garcia Science Center In Garden Judges Training (NMSU) (Busses Load 8:30am)
3:00pm - 4:00pm	SIGNA Program
4:00pm - 5:00pm	AIS Affiliated Societies Meeting
5:00pm - 6:30pm	Past, Present, Future Convention Chairpersons Meeting
6:30pm - 8:30pm	AIS Silent Auction (pick up items only)

Boutique Closed  
7:00pm - 10:00pm Geek Dinner and Auction  
8:30pm - 10:00pm Judges Training Arils and Arilbreds

### **Saturday, April 16, 2022**

TIME	EVENT
8:00am - 8:30am	Registration
9:00am - 3:00pm	Garden Tours – Ayres' Garden/Wilson's Iris Inspire Us Garden (Busses Load 8:30am)
4:00pm	Deadline for BALLOTS
4:00pm - 5:00pm	Registration/BALLOT BOXES
6:00pm - 7:00pm	No Host Reception-Cash Bar
7:00pm - 9:30pm	Awards Banquet

### **Minutes August 19, 2021 by Scarlett Ayres**

1. Meeting was called to order by RVP Eva Barry at 7:02 pm.
  2. Welcome by RVP - Eva welcomed everyone to the convention. This meeting is a Zoom meeting due to CoVid-19 pandemic still being present. Everyone either called in or used their computer to access the convention. Eva asked for every club to bring in new members. Eva summarized some of the zoom meetings that occurred this past year. The pandemic severely restricted in-person meetings and there were no iris shows. The region had an ugly Christmas sweater zoom meeting in December that was fun. Monty Bilberry and Isabel Olsen won the awards for ugliest Christmas sweater. In March, Scarlett had a Dykes Medal Bingo game that was both educational and fun. Two certificates from Howie Dash were awarded for the winners.
  3. Roll Call for Regional affiliates:
    - AAIS - 6
    - EVIS - 6
    - MVIS - 4
    - PVIS - 4
    - SFIS – 9
- Plus guest speaker Jill Bonino and an unaffiliated new member.
4. **Meeting Minutes.** The minutes from the last meeting were accepted. The minutes are in the convention booklet and are included in the 2020 Region 23 newsletter.

5. **Treasurer's Report** – Debra Bilberry presented the treasurers' report. The report is presented in the convention's booklet.

## 6. **Chairman Reports**

- **Judge's Training Chairman** – Patricia Randall sent to all judges their status. We need more apprentice judges.

- **Region Awards** – The region provides two awards to members. One award is for service and the other award is for judging. Pat requested that people send their service award nominations to her at [patannran@hotmail.com](mailto:patannran@hotmail.com) by October. The awards are not announced and will be presented in Albuquerque in 2022 when we can finally meet in person.

- **Website** – Scarlett Ayres gave a brief demonstration of the website at [aisregion23.com](http://aisregion23.com). She said information can be sent to her about each club and she will include it. She also showed the button to get to the hotel registration and 2022 convention registration. The registration for the convention will be added in September.

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

## 8. **New Business**

AIS Info - The club registration fee required by the AIS will resume in 2022. The new judge's handbook is now out. It is 290 pages. You can print it out or wait to purchase the smaller version to be printed by the AIS. The AIS created 17 webinars. These are on their You Tube channel. Just search for American Iris Society. A handful of the videos are also judges training videos. You cannot obtain the test from You Tube. Instead go to <https://www.irises.org/judges/> and scroll down. The videos listed here will also contain links to the tests. Just scroll down. Once you have finished and graded the test, send it to Patricia Randall at [patannran@hotmail.com](mailto:patannran@hotmail.com) .

2022 Convention – Scarlett and Howie gave an overview of the type of help needed for the convention. A summary is listed in the registration booklet. All clubs agreed to sponsor snacks and water for one garden each. MVIS requested the other clubs provide 1-2 items for the goodie bag. A hospitality chairman is needed to organize the delivery of snacks and water and hosting in the gardens. MVIS obtained agreement by the Master Gardeners of Las Cruces to help host in the gardens. One Irisarian should be paired with a Master Gardener. They will also help man the registration tables. Shirly Trio has agreed to be head bud captain. We do have out-of-towners who agree to be bus captains. They should be paired with someone from the region. There will be 6 gardens at the 101st AIS Convention in Las Cruces. The theme is Iris Enchantment. Still need someone to be in charge of counting the ballots. This is the first AIS National

convention in New Mexico. This is a good time to advertise the convention to other garden clubs in New Mexico as well as Botanical gardens. Who knows, maybe we can gather new members.

Silent Auction – Eva is in charge of the Silent Auction. Everyone is encouraged to clean out their closet of Iris paraphernalia and donate. Debbie Frasier will be storing donations.

Boutique – Scarlett Ayres will oversee the Boutique. It has been difficult to find artists due to crafts fairs having been canceled. She asks people to contact their artist friends. They can mail their items to MVIS or just bring the items with them. The region gets 20% of all sales. Cost of mailing back unsold items will be deducted. The region is not responsible for theft or damage. This needs to be made clear to the artists.

## 9. Programs

The program was “Iris Color Pattern Terminology” provided by Jill Bonino of California. She is a master judge and AIS treasurer. She presented a delightful program showing the different color patterns and enhancements. Pictures of old irises as well as seedlings were presented.

10. **Gift Certificates** - A random draw of a gift certificate was made for each club. The meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm.

Good Job Eva Barry for setting this up and running a meeting in a format very different from the region’s usual format.

Scarlett Ayres

RVP Secretary

## Region 23 Convention Speakers

Jill Bonino has been a member of AIS since 1996 and is a Master Judge. She is currently the AIS Treasurer and AIS Foundation Secretary/Treasurer. Jill grows all classes of iris, except Japanese and Pacific Coast Iris, in the Los Angeles area and has an enormous iris background. She has been giving iris programs since 1998, has organized a National Convention, and judged International Iris Competitions. Recently Jill co-hosted the First International Iris Competition in the US and gave the June 9, 2021, AIS webinar “Tall Bearded Iris Today and Tomorrow.”

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

Another year has come and gone and from reports received many regional certified judges have held and conducted, and/or attended various training sessions, both

classroom and in-garden, despite the problems of the pandemic. It was rewarding to see that we all take our judge's certification very seriously and have not allowed the lockdowns from the virus to quell our desire to keep our status current.

I have been keeping track of information from our judges, and any training instructors to keep worthy judges in mind to continue receiving an annual judge's award. We will have several awards forthcoming at our Regional Convention to finally be held in August 2022. An updated report will be provided at the convention and each award recipient will receive a thank you gift.

Many of our judges have taken advantage of the AIS Webinars provided by several judges across the nation in the past two years. The judges were required to provide me with a copy of their tests for credit.

Judges were reminded to vote their American Iris Society Official Ballot, as well as the Annual Region 23 Judge's Activity Report so as not to lose their AIS judge's certification. I think the judges will also be happy with the newly revised Region 23 Annual Activity Report. It now only requests information that is required for the National Report for continued certification. All of the requirements for info used in the past was from the form compiled many, many years ago and required data no longer relevant for our annual AIS report.

We were able to promote Mary Moon, Robin Kishbaugh, and Kevin Konetzni from EVIS, and Isabel Olsen from PVIS to the status of Apprentice Judge (welcome aboard, looking forward to working with all of you in the future). The Region 23 Garden and Exhibition Judges: Scarlett Ayres, Eva Barry, Debra Bilberry, Howard Dash, Betty Ann Gunther, Steve Kelly, Jacqueline Pountney and Loui Reyes. Master Judges: Pegi Blackwell-Smith, Helen Crotty, Frances Day, Henry J. Day, Phil Doonan, Patricia Feather, Ken Fladager and Cindy Rivera. Emeritus Judge: Patricia Randall.

All our judges well deserve our thanks for helping with judging duties at our affiliate shows and stepping forward to provide needed training sessions to help all of us to keep our statuses current.

If there are any Region 23 members who would like to become a judge, please contact me. You would also need to purchase a Judge's Handbook to have it available for all training sessions. The Handbook is available to order online from the American Iris Society web page.

You can contact me via email at [patannran@hotmail.com](mailto:patannran@hotmail.com). Thank you and "happy judging."

## Articles

### 50 Years of Mesilla Valley Iris Society (1971-1921)

By Ann Colwell, Fern Gold and Scarlett Ayres

The first meeting of the Mesilla Valley Iris Society was held nearly fifty years ago in 1971. Gus and Edith Seligman, George and Jackie Bryant first belonged to the iris club located in El Paso, Texas, 45 miles to the south of Las Cruces. Gus had a heart attack and while he was recuperating, he was called Jackie several times a day to talk about irises and the El Paso Club. Jackie suggested that he start a local society in Las Cruces since she thought he needed something else to occupy his mind during his convalescence. The club is named after the Mesilla Valley which bisects Las Cruces. The valley was formed by repeated heavy spring floods of the Rio Grande and the soil is a fertile clay loam. On either side of the valley are the mesas. The soil on the mesas are sandy loam and is poor in organic matter.

Seven people attended the first meeting: Gus & Edith Seligman, George and Jackie Bryant, Lois and Jim Patton and Fern Gold. The El Paso club rapidly diminished and closed a few years later. The few remaining members joined MVIS. Gus was the first president. Ann Colwell, Luella Danielson and Sharon McAllister joined in the mid-seventies. Sharon was de facto parliamentarian for as long as she was active. Most of the initial meetings were at Gus and Edith's home. Even in the winter, club members had to go out and check on how the seedlings were growing. Ann states that the neighbors must have thought they were nuts! The club had a special meeting with potluck each September close to Gus' birthday. The El Paso group would come up and everyone would view the Seligman's garden.

The early programs were iris slides. Gus, Jackie and George would often talk to the club about iris. George and Jackie had sandy soil but very healthy iris. They were very generous with iris; giving each member some of the irises. George was heavy into Arils—they did well in his sandy soil. Gus also liked the arils & got into hybridizing and has 15 arilbreds listed in the Iris Wikipedia. Sharon became a renowned Arilbred hybridizer and has hybridized over 135 Arilbred Irises and several pure Arils. It is unclear who mentored whom, but New Mexico has created many of the Arilbreds in commerce (often through the Aril Society International).

MVIS asked the local garden clubs if they could have their first show in conjunction with theirs at the Loretto Mall. This first show was difficult to set up since club members had to use lumber and cement blocks to make tables for the show. The lumber was usually loaned to MVIS by the Woodward Lumber Company. They borrowed coke bottles from the coke company for the horticulture specimens and cleaned and returned them after the show. Safeway loaned the club large cans of juice which were used with stiff paper

to make a divider down the center of the lumber-built tables. Later the club borrowed tables from the Knights of Columbus and transported them to the show themselves. They were very heavy and there must have been a lot of younger members back then. After a couple of years of rhizome sales, the club made enough money to buy the white milk vases that are still in use. After a couple of more sales, tables were purchased (still heavy!). Currently, the club has their show at the Mesilla Valley Mall. Tables are rented for \$10/table from the mall. The mall sets up the table for the club. This cuts the work in half. Continuing the MVIS practice, many club members donated their irises after the show to make 6 vases of iris which were given to assisted living centers.

MVIS has held an annual rhizome sale from the beginning to provide funds for club activities. Activities include shows and buying a recently introduced iris for each member. At first the club met at Bryant's home the afternoon before the sale. Each club member would bring the rhizomes they had to contribute already trimmed and washed. They would write the Info on the leaves. Later the club would meet at Seligman's and/or at Gene & Maggie Davis' (those were the two big growers) to help with the digging and prep.

In the early years MVIS held the sale on the weekend following Independence Day. However, that is the hottest time of the year with temperatures frequently over 100° F. Finally, the club wised up and have what is now called the "Big Dig" around Labor Day weekend with the rhizome sale the following weekend.

As years went by the digging operation expanded to a weeklong project. The club worked at 4 or 5 different gardens, hauling washtubs, lawn chairs, tables & registration books from garden to garden. Everyone was younger back then! In the mid-eighties, the sale made slightly over \$1000. The club thought they hit the big time! Now club members bring iris to Wilson's farm. They have the most important item needed for a Big Dig; shade. In 2019, the club had over 400 varieties for sale. The club had two additional sales at the Knights of Columbus and after all these years, the club went back to its roots in El Paso and held a sale at the Sunland Park Mall.

At the Christmas potluck, club members use to dress-up as an iris and the other members would guess which iris they portrayed. Lately, in December, the club has been going to the historic Double Eagle Restaurant (owned by club member Margaret Ritter's husband) for their famous Champagne Brunch. It is a culinary experience. The club plays Secret Santa.

Many club members have been active on the national level. Maxine Perkins was president of the Spuria Iris Society which is a section of the AIS. Howie Dash is president of the Aril Society International which is a cooperating society of the AIS. He

is also RVP councilor to the board of the AIS. Scarlett Ayres has written several articles for the AIS bulletin.

Besides Sharon McAllister and Gus Seligman, newer club members have carried on hybridizing for new irises. Howie Dash won the prestigious Zurbrigg-Mahan Award for best TB seedling at the national convention in Des Moines Iowa. Steve Kelly, also, has many irises in commerce.

In 2018 Wes and Cynthia Wilson co-chaired and MVIS hosted an Aril Trek which is a convention devoted to Arils and Arilbreds. Seventy-five people visited four gardens during peak Arilbred bloom season. Perry Dyer was overheard saying "best Arilbred display I have ever seen". The ArilTrek was good practice because in 2021 the 101st AIS National Convention will be held in Las Cruces. Club members found themselves planning for a national convention during a worldwide Covid 19 Pandemic while under lockdown. Some of the convention gardens could not be entered while under lockdown. Luckily, irises are hardy, and the irises are under drip. Steve, Howie and Scarlett will have irises in the convention gardens. The next century of the AIS begins in New Mexico. By coincidence this is MVIS half-century anniversary.





**Figure 2 2018 ArilTrek at the Wilsons**

## **AIS News**

The AIS is having an AIS membership drive in the spring of 2022. The membership drive consists of a free annual AIS print membership for every first-time member of an AIS affiliate, club or section, if that person is not a prior AIS member. Eligible memberships must be submitted by the section or affiliate to the AIS Membership secretary. The print membership consists of 4 prints of Irises.

## **Website News**

The website now includes the ability to add a calendar for each club. It also now includes the ability to create posts for each club. The clubs should contact the webmaster with events and news.

## **Geek Corner**

A QR code (quick-response code) is a type of two-dimensional matrix barcode, invented in 1994, by Japanese company Denso Wave for labelling automobile parts. It features

black squares on a white background with fiducial markers, readable by imaging devices like cameras. The required data are extracted from patterns that are present in both the horizontal and the vertical components of the QR image. A user can point their smart phone camera at the QR code, and a website URL will appear on the smart phone. Then the user can click on that URL and be taken to the website. This can be used as follows

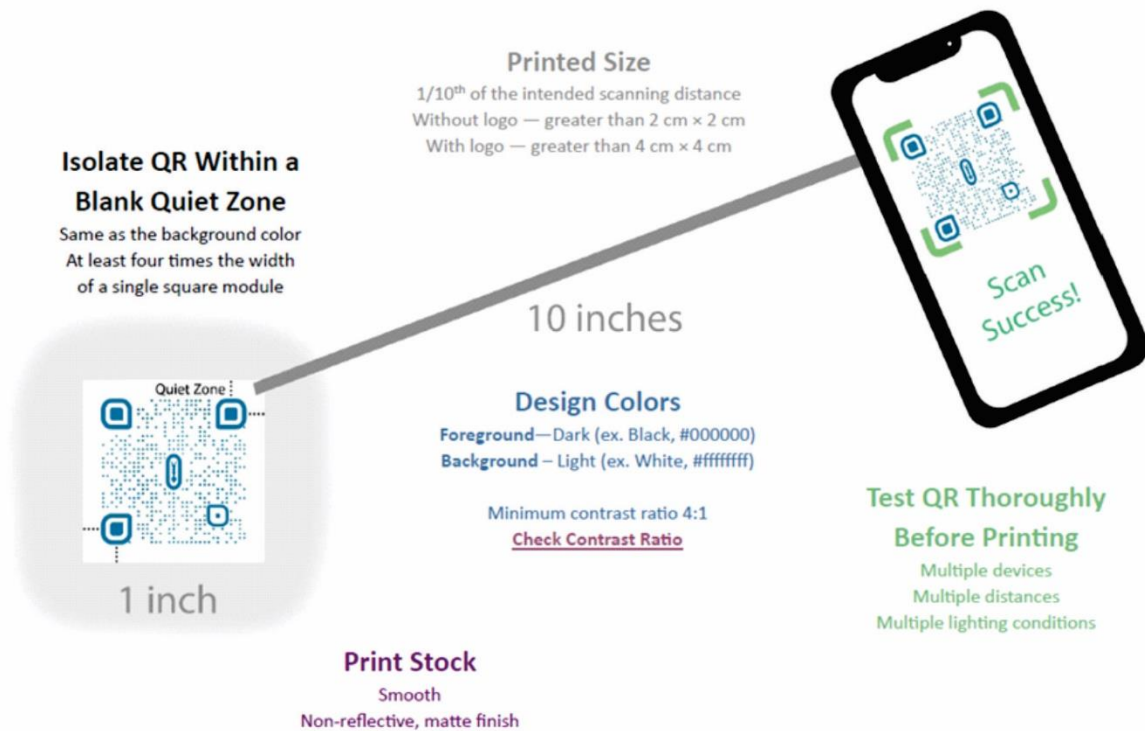
- Create one for your website, and add it to any presentation or YouTube videos that you may give to the public
- Add one to the end of every presentation, taking people to a handout for the presentation, or your speaker one sheet
- Make one for something in a presentation where people can find out more info (like about the AIS)
- Create ones for different sections of your website, so you can send people to the right place
- You can also create QR codes to direct people to downloads, such as press releases, or teasers for an event you're organizing.
- Add QR codes to your sale pictures of irises. The QR code can take people directly to the Iris Wikipedia page for that iris. This enables them to see more pictures and find out additional information about that iris.
- Don't forget to add a "Join AIS QR" or "Join my club QR code" where appropriate.

There are several free QR code generators that are available online. You have to be careful and check if the QR codes that you generate are temporary. They might last only a year. Try:

<https://www.qrcode-monkey.com>

<https://www.qrcodechimp.com/>

## Technical Recommendations for QR Codes



### American Iris Society News

**Future AIS Conventions Locations:** The 2022 AIS National Convention is to be held in Las Cruces, NM April 13-16. This is the first time it will be held here in NM. The 2023 AIS National Convention will be in Dallas, Texas April 10-15.

### On the Lighter Side

"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."

"Irises grow just fine in the weeds. Just ask any irisarian in New Mexico!"

"Plant and your spouse plants with you; weed and you weed alone." — Jean Jacques Rousseau

“Weeds are like children: they’re always coming back.” – Unknown

“Weeding is the art of removing plants that you don’t want while leaving the ones you do want. It’s a delicate balancing act.” – Unknown

“I’m not sure what’s worse, weeding or my neighbor’s dog.” – Unknown

“A weed is a plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered.” – Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Weeds are nature’s way of saying, ‘Hey, you forgot something!’” – Unknown

“The philosopher who said that work well done never needs doing over never weeded a garden.” — Ray Everson

“Gardeners are the original multitaskers. We can weed, prune, and daydream all at the same time.” – Unknown

"A weed is a plant that has mastered every survival skill except for learning how to grow in rows." – Doug Larson

“Why do irisarians make good detectives? “Because they have all the dirt.”

“Without hard work, nothing grows but weeds.”

“My garden is not a weed patch, it’s a biodiversity hotspot.” – Facebook Post

“When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it is a valuable plant.” – Unknown

“Weeds are flowers too, once you get to know them.” - A.A. Milne

“I’m not sure what’s worse, weeding or my mother-in-law.” – Unknown

“If you have a weed problem, you’re not gardening hard enough.” – Unknown

“Weeds are the only plants that listen to you.” – Unknown

“The only thing worse than weeding is not weeding.” – Unknown

“Housework is for people who don’t like to weed.”

“A weed is just an unloved flower.”

“Do you pray for rain to make the irises grow or wish the rain would stop for making the weeds grow.” – Scarlett Ayres

“I do some of my best thinking in my iris bed while pulling weeds”

“I’m not sure what I’m doing wrong with my garden. I planted a seed and it grew up to be a weed.” – Unknown

“I love gardening. It’s so relaxing. Except for when I have to weed. Then it’s just plain annoying.” – Unknown

“Gardening: The art of planting irises and pulling weeds.” – Unknown

“Marriage is like gardening. You have to weed out the bad, water the good, and enjoy the flowers.” – Unknown

“Irises are slow, and weeds make haste.” — William Shakespeare (modified)

“I don’t have a garden; I have a Jurassic Park for weeds. It’s like a prehistoric weed-venture out there.” – Unknown

## Poetry

Here is a short poem inspired by the students who helped with the upcoming national convention.

### *Closing Prayer from the “Navajo Way” Blessing Ceremony: June 16, 2016 by Maria Wind Talker*

*Today I will walk out, today everything unnecessary will leave me,  
I will be as I was before, I will have a cool breeze over my body.  
I will have a light body, I will be happy forever,  
nothing will hinder me.*

*I walk with beauty before me.  
I walk with beauty behind me.  
I walk with beauty below me.  
I walk with beauty above me.  
I walk with beauty around me.  
My words will be beautiful.  
In beauty all day long may I walk.*

*Through the returning seasons, may I walk.  
On the trail marked with pollen may I walk.  
With dew about my feet, may I walk.  
With beauty before me may I walk.  
With beauty behind me may I walk.  
With beauty below me may I walk.  
With beauty above me may I walk.  
With beauty all around me may I walk.  
In old age wandering on a trail of beauty, lively, may I walk.  
In old age wandering on a trail of beauty, living again, may I walk.  
My words will be beautiful.*

Much of this newsletter was pulled from the Booklet prepared by Rae Phillips, AAIS officer & EVIS member

Iristatically Yours

Scarlett Ayres, editor