



Prescott Area Iris Society

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President's Message

Greetings to All,

Can you believe that it is November! Fall is in full swing already, the morning chill is in the air and the leaves are turning color. After a long hot summer the weather is finally beginning to cool off. Where has the year gone? The beginning of the Holidays is just a few weeks away.

As I write this, my last message to you as your President, I find myself split with emotion and thoughts of the past five years. This is my last year as your President. We will have a new President next year with new vigor and ideas to move PAIS forward. Being president of PAIS has brought me great joy. I have met and been a part of the lives of many wonderful people in PAIS and also across the country as a member of AIS Region 15, The American Iris Society, The Historic Iris Preservation, and recently the Spurias Iris Society.

Being Your President has allowed me to meet and become involved with many irisarians, AIS affiliates and hybridizers across the US and Canada, being able to share with them ideas, what we do as an affiliate of AIS in Prescott and what others do across the country. PAIS has come to be known across the county as "a very active and community oriented club", it has become an example to AIS nationally of what an AIS affiliate is supposed to be. That national recognition is due to you our members and your dedication not only to PAIS but to the mission of PAIS and its community involvement. PAIS is not just a club it is a diverse and close knit family of individuals, irisarians, with many common goals for the club and for outreach into our greater Prescott community. I have been told by numerous members of the national AIS that they love to read our newsletter and go to our website to see what we are doing.

We have accomplished much over the past five years; youth and adult education programs, establishment and expansion of our public gardens programs at the Marcusen Sculpture Garden at Yavapai College, the Memorial Gardens at Embry-Riddle University, Historic Iris Gardens at the Sharlot Hall Museum, assisting with redevelopment of the old Citizens Cemetery, support of the Yavapai Food Bank, and our two horticultural scholarships at Yavapai College. The spring show Kaleidoscope of Color Festival of Iris and our summer iris sale have become so popular they draw people from across the state and the southwest. I have been proud to be part of an organization that has accomplished so much.

I thank you for the support you have given me. Our new president will be on board the first of the year and I ask that we all support our new president by continuing to support the organization by participating on the board, in our events and volunteering for our projects.

Best regards to All,

Dennis Luebkin, PAIS President



**Don't forget our
FALL Potluck
November 18th
1:30
@ Yavapai Title**



November 18, 1:30 p.m. Yavapai Title
Reblooming Iris presentation, potluck & elections

Carole and Paul Buccheim, owners of Mystic Lake Iris Gardens in southern California, will present a program telling you all you have ever wanted to know about reblooming iris. If you can't wait for their presentation, Carole's article on reblooming iris is in the Region 15 Newsletter, Fall 2017, page 9. <http://www.region15ais.org/newsletter/>. Remember to bring a healthy contribution for our potluck.

If you are a Facebook user, you may want to join the Reblooming Iris Society Facebook group. The Reblooming Iris Society (RIS) promotes irises that bloom more than once per year. This Facebook group is for people who share a common interest to post pictures of reblooming irises and to share experiences about growing reblooming irises; such as what blooms in their garden and what USDA Zone their garden is in. The group is open to all. Membership in this group is free. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/144961258880171/>



Reblooming iris in Loretta's garden,
photos by Cynthe Brush



Sunset Punch, Sutton, 2011
Early rebloomer, novelty iris



Watch your Mailbox

It's that time of year again. Your Membership Renewal Requests were recently dropped in the mail.



Judged May 6, 2017 Iris Show Winners and Aug 18, 2017 Photo Contest



Katy Standhardt with Best of Show Iris certificate (winner Mesmerizer), and bronze medal and certificate for second highest number of blue ribbon Iris (2).



Then, Carolyn Alexander with the silver medal and certificate for most blue ribbon Iris (5).



First Place Winners ~ Marge Larson, Single Iris, Carolyn Alexander, for Iris Landscape, Katy Standhardt, Iris/Something Else



Second Place Winners ~ Carolyn Alexander w/2 awards for single iris & animal(dog) with iris, Cynthe Brush tied for Macro, Katy Standhardt for landscape, & Kellie Smith tied for Macro.



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Gardening Tips Late Summer/Fall Iris Care ~ by Dennis Luebkin

Here we are at the end of summer. It's September and we are wrapping up summer and looking ahead to fall and cooler weather. We are nearing the end of our planting season so timing is important. Some of us have still been digging and dividing our gardens or have purchased irises at the club sales or commercially and have not yet planted them. It is important to get our treasures in the ground before the middle of September. It takes 3 to 4 weeks to establish new roots before cold weather sets in, so to get iris ready for winter, here are a few tips.

Planting: Go to the PAIS website <http://prescottirissociety.org> to view the "How to Grow Irises in the Tri City Area". If your rhizomes have been out of the ground for a while and are looking dry, soak them for 3 to 4 hours in a bucket of water. You can also add some vitamin B1 to the water to rehydrate them before planting. Based on your soil condition, amend your soils with All Purpose Soil Conditioner and Seed Cover (or similar product) and alfalfa meal while digging and replanting.

Cleaning: Remove dead fans and old bloom stalks. Also clean any leaf debris from around the rhizomes and remove any soil from the tops of the rhizomes. Leave about the top 1/4 to 1/3 of the rhizome exposed. Remember the rhizomes like some sunlight and air. This will also help prevent rhizome rot. If you should notice any soft rhizomes during cleanup or detect a rotten odor you can apply some Ajax or similar chlorinated cleaner on top and around the rhizome. The chlorine will assist in killing the bacteria causing the rot. Weeds and grasses are a problem after our summer monsoon. Remove weeds and grasses so they do not compete with the irises.

Fertilizing: Fertilize with a good 10-10-10 with trace elements. You can use Best 6-24-24 (nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium) fertilizer for re-bloomers. You can also use a good rose food for strengthening the rhizome and root system for the winter months. If you have rebloomers, this will also help them rebloom. Irises are heavy feeders. Nitrogen promotes good overall growth and green fans. Phosphorus and potassium help in the development of a strong root system, resist disease and produce abundant bloom for rebloomers and for the following spring.

Pest control: Thrips and aphids lay their eggs at the base of the fans so be sure to clean out the dead fans and leaf debris.

Watering: With the warm dry summer we have had, continue watering through the warm weather twice a week to establish newly planted rhizomes and then begin to cut back on the watering to once week. If the ground begins to look dry check 3 inches below the ground to see how moist the ground is if it is dry, water with a deep soaking. After the first freeze cut back watering to an as needed basis. Happy gardening!!

Winter Iris Care - by Dennis Luebkin

With the cold weather and some freezing temperatures upon us, rest assured winter is just around the corner. Central Arizona and the Prescott area have one of the most diverse climate zones in the state and perhaps the Southwest. Just within a 40 mile radius of downtown Prescott, we have changes in elevation from 8,500 ft to 3,500 ft. Because of the diversity of climate zones, the conditions for your iris care vary somewhat along with the time periods that we do our seasonal work. The warmer your microclimate is the later you can complete your iris care. In general, our fall and winter care should be as follows:

Cleaning and Weeding: Keep your iris beds free of dead leaves and weeds. Pull out those pesky elm tree seedlings. The longer you wait the tougher they are to get out. In warmer areas leaves will begin to brown. In our colder areas leaves have already turned color, wilted from the freezing temperatures and fallen. Cleaning and cutting iris leaves is somewhat of a personal preference. You either do it in the fall or early spring (kind of a pay now or pay later scenario). Some like to cut them in the fall others like to do the cleaning in the early spring. Leaf litter is great for composting. If you are into that, save the leaves and compost them for use in the garden.

Remove the dead leaves by pulling or cutting. One thing to note, leaves that are not dead or dying back are still producing food for the rhizome even during the fall and winter, so exercise care in how much of the fan you remove. If the leaves are dead, remove them since the dead leaves harbor the eggs of thrips and aphids.

Check the rhizomes to see if they are covered or buried too deeply. Two things will happen during the freeze/thaw weather of late fall and winter. Freezing will either cause the ground to rise around the rhizome and cover it up or it will lift the rhizome and pop it out of the ground. Either uncover the top of the rhizome or push the rhizome back into the ground and cover the roots, but keep the top of the rhizome uncovered.

Look for root rot. As you clean, check for the smell of rotting leaves and rhizomes. If the rhizome is soft take action immediately. Comet or Ajax cleanser is good to use on the rhizome. Cut off the rotted area, then sprinkle the cleanser on the affected area of the rhizome. This will help dry out the rhizome and kill bacteria and fungus.

Mulching: For those of us who live in colder areas with lower temperatures, mulching may be advisable this year. For those with the availability of pine needles, mulching with them over tender plants, roses and your irises, both potted and in the ground will help get them through a long cold winter. If you do not have pine needles straw is a good substitute. Other leaf and vegetative material are not advised since they decompose quickly and may cause the rhizomes to rot.

Fertilizing: Don't fertilize at this time. Fertilizing now stimulates new growth which you do not want now. Irises need some dormancy before putting on their spring growth and bloom. You should wait until February. We try to fertilize by Valentine's Day as a bench mark. We call it "Love Your Iris Day". At the latest, fertilize early in March. We will talk more about fertilizing at our February meeting. If you live in a warmer climate zone such as Sedona, Camp Verde area or Yarnell, fertilizing in late January and early February is appropriate.

One thing to note concerning one of our most favorite fertilizers. Although it may be a very effective fertilizer and insect control, some of the ingredients in "Bayer Systemic Rose and Flower Care", or two in one, which is used to control thrips and aphids, have been linked to the decrease in the honey bee population. A multipurpose food such as Arizona's Best all purpose food, 10-10-10 is still recommended or use Best 6-24-24XB which also contains sulfur and iron which is wonderful for bloom production. All purpose rose foods may also be used.

Watering: Watering is dependent upon our weather. If the winter is dry and warm, watering every week or two should be appropriate. If we have a cold wet winter you may not need to water very much. Check the soil moisture by digging down about 3 inches. If the ground is dry, give the iris a deep watering.

Composting: Composting is good to do during the off season. You can even use the iris leaves to add to your compost pile. Your irises are taking a winter holiday break to regenerate for spring, so you can too. Enjoy the holidays!!!

Attracting Birds To Our Backyards ~ by Cynthe Brush

PAIS article inspired by Eric Moore of Jay's Bird Barn's guest presentation

At our September 2017 PAIS meeting, members were attentively listening to Eric Moore's suggestions on how to attract more birds and which species to our backyards and landscapes. He shared photographs of frequently seen birds and more occasional avian visitors.

Different northern Arizona habitats ~ grassland, chaparral, riparian, pinyon/juniper or ponderosa pine forests ~ support foraging behavior of differing bird species. In the Prescott area, PAIS members living in TimberRidge or Forest Trails will get completely different birds in their yards compared to residents of Prescott Lakes or Cliff Rose. The same with residents living up Senator Highway in Groom Creek compared to folks living out along Williamson Valley Road, Chino Valley and Prescott Valley. It's helpful to know the type of native habitat where you live to have a better idea of what birds may be around.

Wild birds have four basic needs:

1) FOOD

Most wild birds have unique food preferences. They'll pick through seed mixes, eating what they like and kicking or tossing out ingredients they don't want...onto your deck, patio, or the ground making a huge mess!!

~ Seeds, can be offered in feeder tubes, hanging feeders or suspended flat trays, in sturdy dishes placed on the ground or scattered, where you won't object to volunteer sunflowers. Seed mixes attract a wide range of birds like Chickadees, lots of friendly Finches, the occasional Grosbeak, Juncos, Mourning Doves, Northern Flickers, Nuthatches, Pine Siskin, many Sparrows, Ruby-crowned kinglets, Rufous-sided Towhees, Titmice, Woodhouse's (formerly known as Western) Scrub Jays, Wrens, a variety of Woodpeckers, and Yellow-Rumped Warblers.

Eric mentioned Jay's Bird Barn supplies several 'no waste' seed mix blends ideal for native birds in the Tri-City area. These blends are a better value than the generic seed mixes offered by big box stores made for national distribution. Plus JBB's mixes are blended near the airport by Yavapai Exceptional Industries that employs our communities' mentally-challenged adults providing local folks with valuable jobs.



Finch & Chipping Sparrow
Photo Courtesy of Cynthe Brush

~ Raw peanuts in the shell will attract hordes of social, vocal Scrub Jays letting others know the 'getting's good!' And reminding YOU that it's time to feed them at the break of dawn and as the sun sinks in the west. Charming! JBB's prices are very good per pound of peanuts. One caveat, 'budget' your peanut offerings to only 3-4 cups (morning and/or evening) or the jays will 'eat you out of house and home!' My hubby and I were worried about overfeeding the demanding jays... JBB's staff told us during autumn, Scrub Jays don't eat all those peanuts that vanish within minutes! They hide them in trees and bushes for winter foraging. I asked, "Do jays remember where they hid them?" Laughing the JBB folks said, "Not always."

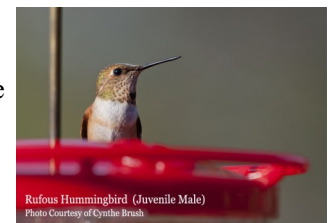


Western Scrub Jay
Photo Courtesy of Cynthe Brush

~ Seed studded suet blocks are excellent feed in autumn and winter as temperatures drop, when local and migrating birds need high protein / high fat diets for those extra warming, energizing calories. Based on Eric's recommendation, we hung our first suet feeder in mid-September thinking it was still a bit early in the season. But little clinging birds like Mountain Chickadees and Bushtits found it right away and they're already nibbling down the third seeded suet block a month later.

~ Organic Sugar-Water Nectar (NO coloring) for our wonderful variety of hummingbirds: Anna's; Black-Chinned; Broadtailed; and the flashy, bossy Rufous that migrate through the Tri-City region. Make your own nectar using non-GMO organic sugar and water. Use one hand to recall the ratio: 1 (thumb) of sugar to 4 (fingers) of water. We make a quart at a time and keep the extra cold in the refrigerator, so it doesn't spoil and become vinegar.

Another suggestion Eric made is to hang several feeders for highly territorial hummers, to give more of them a chance to feed. Check your feeders every few days, especially during warm weather, to keep the nectar fresh. It spoils quickly! Also, keep one feeder out in the winter, if an Anna's or Black-chinned Hummingbird decides to forgo migrating. We bring the feeder in after dark and rehang it at first light to keep the nectar from freezing once the temperatures drop below 32F.



Rufous Hummingbird (Juvenile Male)
Photo Courtesy of Cynthe Brush

Folks may be surprised to see a woodpecker at their nectar feeders, but it's no secret - woodpeckers love sugar water! Here in the Central Highlands, we have several different woodpecker species: Hairy, Acorn, Ladder-backed, and northern Flickers. Ladder-backed woodpeckers are the most common woodpecker in our area to go after hummingbird feeders. Orioles will also visit hummingbird feeders for a sweet sip.

~ Fresh fruit (apples & oranges are easy) can be offered in chunks or slices on a spike. Try plums, grapes and raisins, too. Many birds have a preference for sweets like Chickadees, Finches, Grosbeaks, Orioles, Phainopepla, Scrub Jays, Waxwings and Wrens. Birds will also forage berry bushes, fruiting vines, and to home orchardists' frustrations... your fruit trees. Planting pyracantha bushes and other hardy berries will provide American Robins and Western Bluebirds abundant food in the winter months.



2) WATER

One of the most important things you can offer wild birds is an open, clean source of water. Whether it is a simple bird bath, a solar run fountain, or an elaborate pond with a waterfall, water is a magnet for birds.

During summer's heat we keep a large resin pot saucer full of water under one of our juniper alligator trees for wildlife (and neighbors free ranging dogs). The other morning, we saw Mourning Doves sipping from the edge of the saucer.



Seeing the doves, reminded me to place a thin lipped, ceramic dish of water on the railing of our second story deck. Within a few hours smaller birds ~ Finches, Sparrows, and a Spotted Towhee ~ started drinking from it! Check and change the water frequently, because in our dry climate it evaporates quickly. Plus you'll find feathers and bits of poop soiling the bowl.

Don't forget! Even in the dead of winter, wild birds need fresh water to drink and bathe. Birds bathe frequently to clean their feathers, because clean feathers are more effective at insulating against the cold. Consider using either a heated bird bath or a bird bath heater this winter to keep your bird bath open and accessible to birds that depend on water for survival. American Robins, Western Bluebirds, and Cedar Waxwings frequent bird baths in flocks. Having a bird bath is the best way to attract these birds to your yard.

3) COVER



Gambel's Quail are found in chaparral and pinyon/juniper habitats. Quail are very cover dependent, preferring habitats with low growing, ground hugging vegetation. And all small to medium sized birds need cover for safety to hide from our local raptors: Coopers Hawks, Kestrels, and Red-Tailed Hawks.

4) SHELTER or HABITAT

Wild birds need places to nest, to rear young, and roost at night. You can add charming, fancy or rustic, birdhouses to your yards, but landscaping with native trees and shrubs, is the most effective way to create a wildlife-friendly yard that's inviting to birds—whether year-round residents or migratory visitors passing through. The more natural you can make your yard, the more success you will have attracting a wide variety of birds including Ravens, Roadrunners, and if your landscape includes tall Ponderosas and mature Alligator Junipers... Great Horned Owls may hunt from their branches in the evening hours.



Learn more: <http://www.jaysbirdbarn.com/weekly-articles/>
<https://www.thespruce.com/birds-that-eat-fruit-including-apples-385829>
<http://arizonasraptorexperience.com>



Welcome to our New Members

Stephen Brubaker
 Patricia Caouette & Igor Zbitnoff
 Emily and Adrian Lane
 Amy Williams

PRESERVING A LEGACY

By Dennis Luebkin

As we mature in life we begin to consider what we have done in our lives to impact the lives of others and what do we leave behind for others to remember us. In the world of irises some would say those are the irises irisarians have hybridized. Whether they hybridize irises for a living or as a hobby they bring new life from old and are creating a new cultivar variety that is different from anything seen before in form, color, pattern; something that may never be repeated. These are things new that brings beauty and enjoyment to the world of gardening. With that in mind what happens to these beauties of the past and present when after a few years a new variety comes along that catches our fancy and the beauties of the past begin to fade from memory and disappear or become lost to the gardening world forever. Preservation collections are the best way to provide that guarantee that a cultivars continued existence for future generations to enjoy is provided. Preservation continues the legacy of those who have given us the beauty we enjoy.

The Historic Iris Preservation Societies Guardian Gardeners program and the AIS National Collections program are such programs to protect those beauties we enjoy now and have enjoyed in the past.

The Prescott Area Iris Society (PAIS) in Prescott Arizona has determined that this preservation aspect of iris cultivation is very important in protecting the Legacy of our Arizona Hybridizers. In 2015 it was determined that the current iris gardens within the Richard Marcusen Sculpture Garden at Yavapai College would be expanded to create Honor Gardens for past and current hybridizers in Arizona. Whether these Gardens are termed Honor Gardens, Legacy Gardens, or Tribute gardens the work of these hybridizers should be recognized for their contributions to creating the beautiful cultivars that we enjoy before they are lost at some future date. It was determined that honor gardens would be created as a tribute to the work of Arizona hybridizers Francelle Edwards (bearded irises), Margie Valenzuela (bearded irises), Don Shepard (Bearded and Spurias irises), Larry Johnsen (Spurias irises), Floyd Wickenkamp (Spurias) and Dr. B. Charles Jenkins (Spurias). These honor gardens are also being developed as AIS National Collections for each of the hybridizers work. Because of the work that PAIS has previously accomplished at the Richard Marcusen Sculpture Garden the garden has been honored to receive the designation of an AIS National Display Garden, and a HIPS National Historic Display Garden. The creation of these national collections will create a location in Prescott where all the known and remaining cultivars of these hybridizers can be seen in one location. Several of these hybridizers are no longer with us but others still provide new cultivars on a regular basis for us to enjoy.

In conjunction with the Yavapai College Foundation, PAIS has partnered with the college in the creation of these gardens. New irrigation systems piping, importing of topsoil and garden signage for creating new garden areas was provided by the college. PAIS installed irrigation emitters, soil amendment, fertilizer, irises, name tags and are providing care and maintenance of the iris gardens.

Collecting the irises of our contemporary hybridizers are less difficult and we anticipate having a national collection for Edwards, Johnsen and Valenzuela by the end of 2018. The irises of our older and past hybridizers like Don Shepard , Floyd Wickenkamp and Dr. B Charles Jenkins are more elusive and challenging. National Collections of their cultivars may take longer since we are finding that some varieties may have already been lost. There are no public gardens which contain the complete works of these hybridizers cultivars in the Southwest US.

The search for these cultivars has been very rewarding personally bringing me in contact with individual irisarians, commercial growers, and the families of these hybridizers all who have been supportive and excited about the idea of the honor gardens. I have made many new friends in this endeavor. Creation of these gardens will be a wonderful display of spring bloom to be enjoyed by the public for years to come.

PRESERVING A LEGACY ~ Continued



c. Comanche Acres

Mahogany Members



Lawrence Johnsen
Mahogany Embers
Spuria 2011



Kathy's Karnival



Don Shepard
Kathy's Karnival
TB 2005



c. Comanche Acres Iris Gardens

Love for Leila



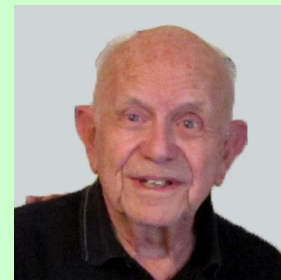
Floyd Wickencamp
Love for Leila
Spuria 1984



Galaxy Lord



Francelle Edwards
Leta Lorraine
TB novelty 2010



Charales Jenkins
Galaxy Lord
Spuria 2008



Margie Valenzuela
Calizona Gold 2012 TB



Completed iris bed, one of seven.

Thank You PAIS - *from Our Community*

What a year for our Public Garden programs! When we work together planting and maintaining our Garden Projects, what do people say about what we do? As President, I am in contact with numerous people in the community and am generally the one who first hears what people say about PAIS. I would like to share what I have heard and have received. Below are some of the written communications and some comments I hear around town. I share these so that you will all know that the work we do is appreciated. We should all thank Patrick Beatty for his guidance in the Sculpture Garden the past several years.

From the National Spuria Society Fall 2017 News Letter:

“The Prescott Area Iris Society in Prescott, Arizona is a very active and community oriented Club. In Cooperation with the Yavapai College, PAIS has established several iris beds in the college’s Sculpture Garden. I have visited the garden and it is magnificent. In the 2016 Fall Edition of the Spuria News it was noted that PAIS received Certification from the American Iris Society for the Richard Marcusen Sculpture Garden. The first designation by the American Iris Society is that of an AIS National Display Garden for the Sculpture Gardens combination of low water use iris plantings. The garden has also been designated as a National Historic Iris Preservation Display Garden for its collection of the William R. Dykes medal irises.”

From American Assoc. of University Women:

The Garden looked fantastically beautiful; the docents were ever so helpful; the food and wine was tasty; and the weather cooperated!

Please thank Judy, Stan, Kathleen and TG for taking time from busy schedules to join us in supporting the fundraising efforts for Yavapai College student scholarships. We were to glad to meet them and to have them join our "merry band of College Supporters". Hope they also had fun. Folks said we should do it again next year. We'll check with you to see if you want to participate again.

Many, many thanks for all of the hard work, assuring that those gorgeous Irises looked at their finest and for being a part of this event.

Warmly,
Anne Barton
AAUW



From the Yavapai College Foundation:

Also, thank you for the donation to AAUW. The event was a great success and Irises played an important role!

Take care,

Mary Taiosi, Foundation Coordinator

From the Yavapai College Foundation

Dennis,

I have truly enjoyed working with you and Patrick and appreciate all you have done for the College and the Foundation. If there are any questions that I can answer please feel free to contact me.

Enjoy your day,

Janice Souttee

Thank You PAIS - from Our Community ~ *Continued*

From the Yavapai College Foundation

Dennis,

Thank you for all that PAIS does for Yavapai College, our students and the community. The society has done an amazing job of creating a place of beauty and enjoyment for the college community and the public. To have the prestigious national historic designation for the collection is something that we can all be very proud of.

Looking forward to working with you in continuing to make the sculpture garden a point-of-pride for our community.

Best always,

Paul

Paul Kirchgraber Interim Executive Director

Embry Riddle Aeronautical University:

The Embry-Riddle Campus celebrated our Octoberwest homecoming this past weekend and among many activities we dedicated the new memorial garden with a small gathering of friends and alumni. See photo below.

The iris garden is doing wonderful and the Prescott Iris Society was thanked for its efforts and generosity. I did receive questions from some of our visitors, asking if you accept monetary donations? and who/where would someone send a gift.

Thanks again Dennis.

Steve

Executive Director of Development

Sounds like y'all are very busy bringing some beauty to areas in Prescott.

Looking forward to the spring garden. It has been gorgeous the past couple of years.

Thanks for everything.

Barb M.



Public Comments:

“I love to walk the Sculpture Garden almost every day to see how the irises are doing. The garden is so beautiful in the spring. What you have done in the sculpture garden is a wonderful addition to Prescott.”

“I live in Paulden and a friend and I come here several times a week when the irises are in bloom. It is so peaceful and beautiful. Each time we come there is something new blooming. It’s wonderful.”

Book Review *by Katy Standhardt*

What a Plant Knows is an eloquent, scientifically accurate & easy to read book of 150 pages by Daniel Chamovitz. I recommend this book if your “iris virus” has you wondering about plants, beyond iris diversity and form.

You will find this book at our libraries, the Peregrine Book Co., and on the internet. Chapter titles give a peek into the fascination of “What a Plant Sees, Smells, Feels, Hears, What a Plant Remembers (without a brain), How a Plant Knows Where It Is, and the Aware Plant”.

AIS Region 15 Fall Board Meeting Minutes-Oct. 14, 2017

Meeting called to order by Debbie James at 8:13am. All members present except Lompoc (in-route), Tucson and treasurer, Carol Huffman and secretary Marge Larson. No treasurers report and 8 affiliates represented. Minutes for Spring Trek Board Meeting read by Sharon Luebkin in Marge Larson's absence (she is awaiting a new knee). Approved by Cheryl Deaton and seconded by Dennis Luebkin.

Report by Sue Brown on 2017 Judges Training, states we have 23 current judges, 2 retired and 4 apprentices. We will have 25 judges in 2018 which includes 3 from Sun Country. We will have 8 apprentices and 8 students.

Patrick Orr reports we have 254 members and is the 5th largest region in the country. He wants to be replaced. We have 10 affiliates. Patrick was not present.

Claire Schneider still doing awards and will continue. All is well, she just needs to turn in receipts.

Cheryl Deaton reported we have 3 youth in Arizona and 7 in California. Need more. She will continue with youth.

Editor Beth Belaney-Train reported this was her last newsletter. She was applauded for a great job. Debbie is thinking about job. Anyone interested let board know.

Winona Stevenson is our Historian and would like all affiliates to send her their Newsletters via snail mail.

Discussion of amount sent by clubs for the Trek irises. Board is expecting \$500.00 from each club as this is the fund raiser. Most clubs do not send that much.

Marilynn Kiger, president of High Desert Iris and Daylily Society reported on some of problems encountered during their Spring Trek. Report attached. After discussion Claire Schneider moved that a "Trek Garden Chairperson" be appointed by the Board to help with continuity between Treks. Katharina Notarianni seconded. Passed unanimously, all agreed this was needed. Marilyn reported they had 75 in attendance, 41 from their own club. Judges training for 34 was provided. They raised money for 2 years and had \$9,467.00 and spent \$7606.00 leaving them with a profit. She thought profit was because Jamison's provided picnic lunch for all at their own expense.

Affiliate Reports

High Desert Iris and Daylily- Finished up all Spring Trek work-sent out 800 rhizomes to all clubs. Selling bulk iris, contact Marilyn Kiger. Thanked All. See report attached.

Inland Region Iris Society-DeDe Utter said will be doing a "Virtual Trek" for Spring of 2019 since usually there is no Trek done because of Region 14 hosting the National Trek. They will also do Fall 2019 Trek and dig their spring iris for the Fall Trek.

Lompoc-No Shows, supposedly in route.

Orange County Iris and Daylily Society-President Dery Gerald reported club struggling, they have 10 members and only she and Mike are active. They have money for 3 years. Lots of ideas and offers of help were given for Board members.

Prescott Area Iris Society-Dennis Luebkin spoke of 7 new gardens in the Yavapai College Sculpture Garden and asked permission to speak at General meeting. He is asking all to lookout for old iris from Don Shephard (TB), Dr. B. Charles Jenkins (Spuria), Floyd Wickenkamp (Spuria) and Larry Johnson (Spuria).

San Fernando Valley Iris Society-Andi Rivarola, president reported problem with Bank of America, who dropped club business and now they are all cash. Club having Marking Party 10/15/17. He suggested ideas for OCIDS.

Southern California Iris Society-Needed more money so they had a second weekend of sales and made \$2,000.00 at each sale. They increased prices and charged 3 for 20.00 instead of 4 for 20.00 and went from \$7.00 to \$10.00 for individual iris. Mike Moniker reporting.

Sun Country Iris Society-Kyria Peavy reported they will be having a judges training by Anna Cadd and lunch on February 10th. She also brought flyers for 2018 Spring Trek and said registration can also be found on their website. Steve Schreiner will be the speaker.

Tucson-not represented

Old Business

Made \$130.00 on Region 15 basket at National. Importance of attendance at Treks was stressed. We have Fall 2021 (PAIS) and Spring 2021 (SDIS) covered

Andi Rivarola gave an update on fires in Northern California, Santa Rosa area. Anna Cadd reported that 5 members have lost their homes and Wild Iris Rose Nursery lost both the nursery and their 1920 Farm House-total loss.

Debbie James adjourned meeting at 9:08.
Respectfully submitted by Sharon Luebkin for Marge Larson

AIS Region 15 Fall Conference GENERAL MEETING 10/14/17

Meeting was called to order by Debbie James at 11:08 following our presentation by Robert Treadway on Louisiana iris and our continental breakfast break. Andi Rivarola asked for time to honor Ed Murray for his 50 years of judging. Lots of cheering!

We were reminded of National Convention April 8-13 and the Society for Louisiana Iris April 12-14. Debbie asked speaker if he was addressing this during his talk, he said he would with pictures.

Debbie called for us to stand by region, break down as follows; High Desert-6, Inland-7, Lompoc-0, Orange County-3, Prescott-6, San Diego-4, San Fernando-4, Southern California-10 (hosting club) and thanks to them, Sun Country-1, Tucson-0.

Claire Schneider, chair of nominating committee announced slate of candidates for Region 15.

- RVP-Sue Brown
- Assistant RVP-Janis Shackelford (SDIS)
- Secretary-Kyria Peavy (SCIS)
- Treasurer-Cheryl Deaton(Inland)

Elections were held and all elected unanimously. Sue Brown took over meeting at that point. Sue mentioned banking problem discussed at Board meeting. Andi Rivarola, president of San Fernando Valley Iris Society, reported on situation with B of A. He also had a report on fires in Northern CA. Anna Cadd of Region 14 said 5 members had lost their homes to the fire and Wild Rose Iris Nursery

(not active) was totally destroyed too.

Sue went over the Trek Wheel as follows;

- 2018-Spring-Sun Country (Phx.)
- 2018-Fall-San Diego
- 2019-Spring-No Trek because of National in Region 14. Virtual Tour by Inland on Garden.
- 2019-Fall-Inland
- 2020-Spring-San Fernando
- 2020-Fall-Tucson?????
- 2021-Spring-San Diego
- 2021-Fall-Prescott (PAIS)

Dennis Luebkin (PAIS) announced new honor gardens planted in the Yavapai College Sculpture Garden. These are the starts of National Collections for our Arizona Hybridizers, Dr. B. Charles Jenkins, (spu), Floyd Wickenkamp (spu), Larry Johnson (spu), Don Shephard (TB and SPU), Margie Valenzuela (TB) and Francelle Edwards (TB) which is almost complete. We need your help in locating missing Don Shephard, Dr. B. Charles Jenkins, Floyd Wickenkamp and Larry Johnson iris. Dennis passed out lists to those interested.

Cheryl Deaton presented gift to outgoing RVP Debbie James. Pin to follow.

Meeting adjourned at 11:25 by Sue Brown.

Respectfully submitted by Sharon Luebkin for Marge Larson

Composting in the Off-Season

Keep composting through winter, not only to get a head start on spring, but to keep all that compostable material out of the landfill.

The basic components to making compost are:

Heat is critical to making compost – cover with clear plastic sheeting to allow warmth of sun

Providing sufficient moisture and oxygen are important factors

Right mix of brown and green waste

Brown waste provides the carbon source needed to decompose the raw material

Leaves, twigs, yard trimmings and straw.

Paper and cardboard, paper towel rolls, egg cartons, vacuum cleaner bags and newspaper (black & white only)

Green waste provides nitrogen the fuels the energy exchange during the decomposition process.

Yard debris from grass clippings

Kitchen scrapes - Vegetables, salad, bread and fruit

Don't add meat, dairy products or grease

Ideal ratio of brown to green waste for optimal decomposition doesn't have to be complicated. Combining 3 or 4 parts brown to 1 part green waste serves as an easy guide.

Water: add enough water so that your compost pile consistently has moisture of damp sponge.

Oxygen is essential. To keep it aerated turn it over once a week with pitchfork.

Activators can help: Plant based heat raising bioactive nitrogen found in meals as cottonseed, soybean, corn canola and alfalfa are great source for adding heat and can be found in feed and farm supply stores. Also, blood meal, feather meal and fish meal.

Size of compost bin or area needs to be large enough for it to be able to cook. 3 by 3 feet or more.

Another idea is to build your garden up through Lasagna Gardening method by Pat Lanza.

Lasagna Gardening: You build your compost pile on top of your current clay, rocky, sanding poor soil. This is called 'sheet composting' creating a garden of layers the way you would make lasagna.

Stake out an area you would like your garden site & begin building up the beds layer by later.

Start with cardboard boxes or black & white newspaper to kill weeds or grass.

Next layer should be 2 to 3 inches of water absorbent material like peat moss.

Next, 4 to 8 inch layer of organic material such as compost

Another layer of peat moss

Another layer of organic material such as grass clippings or yard trimmings

Finally the top of piles may be sprinkled lightly with bone meal or wood ash for add phosphorus and potassium.

If you need to change PH levels use either powdered limestone to raise PH of acid soil or powdered sulphur to lower PH of alkaline soil.

You can either cook the bed by putting plastic sheeting over the bed and waiting or you can plant seeds & small plants for vegetable garden immediately

On the reverse side of Lasagna Gardening there is information I found on internet for Home Depot to make raised garden edges easily and inexpensively. I have been doing raised garden beds because the soil is so poor and the ground is uneven. We have been building ours up with rocks or railroad ties. There are number of raised bed items you can purchase on the internet but they will run you \$150 to \$300 depending on the size bed you want.

Fertilizer 101

By Bob Van Liere – Denver, Co

From 'Tall Talk' Spring 2010 Publication of Tall Bearded Iris Society

How about a refresher course in Fertilizer!

The primary plant food elements essential to our Iris are Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium. The secondary plant food elements are calcium, magnesium and sulfur. A third category of nutrients are called the micronutrient which consist of boron, manganese, copper, zinc, iron, molybdenum and chlorine.

The primary plant food elements are the building blocks or foundation for a good healthy Iris.

Nitrogen – It promotes rapid vegetative growth and gives our Irises a healthy green color. It tends to increase the protein content in our irises. Remember do not apply a high based Nitrogen fertilizer too late in the season as it will cause soft fast growth which then will make our Irises more susceptible to disease and winter kill.

Symptoms of nitrogen-starved Iris:

1. Stunted growth
2. Pale yellowish color
3. Low protein content

Phosphorus – Important element for all plant growth. It is the active ingredient of protoplasm (a substance constituting the basis of living matter in animals and plants (Webster). Phosphorus encourages the development of root formation, advances maturity (brings it to flower sooner), enables seed to develop better and contributes to the overall well being of our Irises.

Symptoms of a phosphorous-starved Iris:

1. Small growth, especially in the root development (what you see on top will be reflected in what is below the soil line).
2. Spindly stalks
3. Delayed maturity (inconsistent blooming or never coming into flower)
4. Tips of older leaves dying
5. Lack of or poor fruit and seed development (budding hybridizers remember your plant needs phosphorus to develop the seeds of that future Dykes Medal Winner).

Potassium – The mystery element. Better defined by what is lacking or deficient in the plant but it is believed to aid in the plant's ability to resist disease, protects in cold and other adverse weather conditions and it functions in the process whereby starches and sugars are made from carbon dioxide and water.

Symptoms of potassium-starved Iris:

1. Irises grow slowly
2. Margins of leaves develop a "scorched effect" starting first on older leaves.
3. Stalk is weak and plants are easily uprooted.
4. Seed is shriveled.
5. Irises resistance to disease is reduced.

The Search Is on For The Irises of Don Shepard

The Prescott Area Iris Society is looking for the following irises to add to the Sculpture Garden in Prescott, Arizona to honor Arizona Hybridizers. If you have any of the following irises either TB's or Spurias, Please, contact Dennis Luebkin at dluebkin@q.com or 623-980-6627.

Spuria: 'Easter Design', 'Laced Sunshine'

Tall Bearded: 'Apricot Chiffon', 'Apricot Fizz', 'Arctic Moon', 'Arizona Citrus', 'Arizona Moon', 'Arizona Red-head', 'Arizona Warrior', 'ASU Jazz', 'Bad Betty', 'Becky Ann', 'Belinda's Lace', 'Benita', 'Berry Twist', 'Big Duke', 'Blue Sateen', 'Blue Spikes', 'Blueberry Skies', 'Bobbie's Peach', 'Bold Prince', 'Brassy Lassi', 'Bright Lady', 'Bruiser', 'Burgundy Love', 'Burnt Sugar', 'Bursting Violet', 'Caramel Bandito', 'Curly Blue',

'Debutante's Dress', 'Delightful Twist', 'Devil's Fork', 'Devil's Spoon', 'Dizzy Love', 'Don's Other Love', 'Dotted Dove', 'Easter Morning', 'Ellen Joy', 'Flamboyant', 'Fragrant Beauty', 'Frizzle Frack', 'Frosty Rum', 'Gold Heaven', 'Golden Raspberry', 'Grape Desire', 'Grape Fiesta', 'Griffin's Pride', 'Hoity-Toity', 'Hot Diva', 'Hot Pizzaz', 'Irish Butter', 'Jalapeno', 'Korena', 'Lemon Cream', 'Ma Moo Jack', 'Marbled Sundae', 'Marshmallow Dream', 'Mona Lorraine', 'Moondust Magic', 'Nancy's Lace', 'Noreen's Delight', 'Panchita', 'Phoenix Fiesta', 'Raspberry Whispers', 'Roman Lady', 'Royal Occasion', 'Royal Stance', 'Sabrina', 'Spaced Out', 'Sparkling Grape', 'Splash of Blue', 'Stormy Cindy', 'Sweet Sunshine', 'Wild Touch'. <http://wiki.irises.org/bin/view/Main/Bio/HybridizerShepardDL>



Happy Birthday to Our friends with October thru January Birthdays



*Oct 1st — Jean Cole
Oct 5th — TG Shaffer
Oct 16th — Brenda Griffin
Oct 16 — Patrick Beatty
Oct 19th — Dora Ward
Oct 25th — Dede Erceg
Oct 25th — Kathy Sisley
Oct 31 — Heather Blakley
Nov 6th — Katy Standhardt
Nov 14th — Darrell Levil*

*Dec 3rd — Joella Cheek
Dec 6th — Judy Reynolds
Dec 7th — Eugene Zielinski
Dec 10th — Marge Larson
Dec 20th — Carolyn Alexander
Jan 9th — Sandra Hennigan
Jan 11th — Clarisa Reynolds
Jan 13th — Judy (JD) Greenberg
Jan 19th — Barbara McCurry*

