



NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2022

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As our year is ending, I want to thank all our hardworking members who have volunteered this year and in the past who keep our gardens beautiful for the public to enjoy. They are the unsung heroes who weed, plant, divide, dig, pot, sell, and store our irises for sales. Without your dedication we would not be the successful, nationally known society that we are. I would also like to thank Sharon Luebkin who for the last eight years has made our plant markers for all our gardens for the hundreds of irises in our displays. This has been a very time-consuming endeavor. I would also like to thank our current and past board members who have worked tirelessly to support PAIS and me.

I will not be running for president this next year. I have been honored to service you all and PAIS. Our nominating committee is currently making calls for candidates for next year's officers.

Best Wishes to All, Dennis Luebkin

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HISTORIC IRIS –WHY CARE? NOVEMBER 19 MEETING

What makes an iris historic? Which iris should be preserved? How to go about preserving them? Cathy Egerer, past president of the Historic Iris Preservation Society, will be answering these questions and bringing us up to speed on this sometimes overlooked area of the iris world.

See you Saturday, November 19, 1:30 pm at Stoneridge Community Center, Prescott Valley.



Note: Members, please make sure that any address, email or phone number changes are submitted to the [Membership chair](#) ASAP. Thank you.

Reblooming Irises

An exciting new area of Irises are the rebloomers. Traditionally most Iris species have bloomed in the spring. Hybridizers soon noticed that some will rebloom in the fall. New hybrids of tall bearded Irises have demonstrated an ability to rebloom farther north before winter and some varieties may rebloom more than once given the right conditions in warmer climates. The Reblooming Iris Society has just published an updated listing of reblooming iris. For information: <https://rebloomingiris.com/wordpress/checklist/>. Several PAIS members iris have rebloomed this fall and are sharing their photos.



No ID Sandra Schilling



Double Your Fun Sandra Schilling



Harvest of Memories Jeri Conklin



Just Call Me Barb McCurry



Rosalie Figge—Barb McCurry



Summer Olympics-Kellie Smith



Fiery Echo Bridget Bernardi



Sunset Punch Bridget Bernardi



Raspberry Frost Bridget Bernardi



Photo Marty Boxer

Community Outreach at Prescott Farmers Market Bill Walter

Due to all the difficulties the pandemic has caused these last couple of years, irises in our gardens kept multiplying, but most of us were unable to get out there and dig up the many clumps that were just bursting at the seams begging to be dug up—until this year. During our Rhizome Sale this summer, we sold all we could, and we potted many of the remaining to sell next year, but we still had several hundred rhizomes left over. Judy Book mentioned the upcoming “seed exchange” sponsored by the Prescott Farmers Market and suggested maybe asking if we might give them away to the community as a ‘public service’ and generate a little publicity for PAIS. Well, the folks running the Farmers Market thought that was a great idea and welcomed us with open arms!

To prepare for the event, we placed 3 miscellaneous rhizomes, a small bag of alfalfa pellets, planting and caring instructions and a PAIS flyer in paper bags to hand out to Farmers Market visitors who stopped by our booth. Many expressed an interest in raising irises and we were glad to entertain their questions and discuss the mission of PAIS. Others were glad just to get a ‘freebie’, and who knows, maybe planting the 3 rhizomes might spark their interest in irises and PAIS when they see the gorgeous blooms in their gardens each spring. Marty Boxer was especially interested in talking with the kids who accompanied a parent, as he has been working with a few ‘garden clubs’ at some of the local elementary schools. He says those kids just “eat up” gardening (albeit not quite literally). Marty made sure each kid got a bag of 3 rhizomes as their own little ‘treasure’. It was quite a successful event and we handed out some 250 bags (or 750 rhizomes) to the community! Many thanks to those PAIS volunteers who stuffed the bags and to those who helped greet visitors at our booth.

The Farmers Market folks said they might like to have us make this an annual event! I told them this was planned as a one-off event due to the pandemic. However...yes, however, perhaps those of us in PAIS could make a deliberate effort to raise as many iris as we can, thereby allowing us to make this project an annual event. Yes? No? What do you think?

BEARDED IRIS FALL AND WINTER CARE

Fall is here, marking the beginning of the iris dormant season. Sanitation is the first step in dormant season care. If you have not already, remove all the spent bloom stalks and any dead or dying foliage.. Dispose of and do not compost any foliage that appears to have any signs of leaf spot. Removing debris and continuing to weed throughout fall and winter will help reduce the environment for overwintering pathogens and pests. Watering is not required in most climates during the winter months. If you live in a drier climate, water sparingly as needed.

If you live in an area with mild winters, winter protection is not necessary. For areas with sustained freezing temperatures or during extreme weather events, watch for heaving soil. This is caused by a freeze-thaw pattern that can result in the dislodging the rhizome. In these cases, pine needles or straw make good winter protection for the iris. Avoid mulches that will trap moisture around the rhizome, as this can induce rot. Remove winter protection promptly in the early spring at the first signs of new growth.

New Tasco Iris Plantings at Sculpture Garden Marty Boxer

Beautiful September weather greeted thirteen PAIS members at the Yavapai College sculpture garden for planting of over 150 donated iris rhizomes.

The irises were a gift from award-winning hybridizer Rick Tasco of Superstition Iris Gardens in Cathey's Valley, California. Tasco and his partner Roger Duncan have won numerous honors for their iris, including two Dykes medals (Splashacata, 2005 and Golden Panther, 2009) and five Wister medals. The donation includes every iris Tasco and Duncan have brought to market .

PAIS President Dennis Luebkin prepared five new beds for the donated plants, aided by Bill Walter and Marty Boxer. A remarkable turnout on planting day made short work of the massive planting. Come spring, the display should be fantastic. Tasco has been invited to Prescott to see the new beds.



Sculpture Garden Planting



Photo by Marty Boxer



Photos by Dennis Luebin



FOR THE LOVE OF HISTORIC IRISES

By Mike Unser, Washington

Like the rest of you, I love irises—all irises. But when it comes to what earns garden space, I have to pick favorites. For that reason, I've chosen to concentrate on growing historic bearded irises—those over 30 years of age, though the bulk of my collection is over 50 years old with most introduced from the 1920s to the 1950s. Modern bearded irises are fine, and I do grow a few, but my passion is for the old ones with their narrower petals, tailored edges and graceful forms. There is real charm and elegance to these antiques and heirlooms that is often missing in today's huge ruffled varieties. I liken it to the difference between Baroque and Art Deco, or a southern belle's frilled and bedecked ball gown and the eponymous "little black dress."

As a member of the Historic Iris Preservation Society (HIPS), I've worked with the rest of our membership to raise awareness of the value of historic irises and the need to keep them around for future generations. We preserve some varieties because of their important genetic contributions to the development of the bearded iris. One of the most interesting aspects of growing many historic irises from a wide variety of eras is getting to see just how they have progressed in form, color and pattern over the decades as thousands of talented people contributed to the cause of their improvement. While most folks recognize the importance of preserving such luminaries as the Dykes Medal winners, there are many varieties just as good, or better, that left a mark on iris history and deserve to be carried on for their merits. 'Snow Flurry' (Rees, 1939) never attained the highest award, but who can deny that it is one of the most important varieties ever produced?



Most historic irises have proven their value as good garden plants just by being survivors, an essential trait as we face extreme weather conditions with more predicted. Incorporating the genes for vigor from the hardiest of our old survivors could greatly strengthen new lines of breeding. Who knows what else our talented hybridizers will do as science continues to unlock the secrets of DNA? And who can say what old varieties may hold a clue in their genes that answers a question we have yet to even ask? If they are not here for future study, that genetic record will be lost, and perhaps a key gene arrangement with it.

Con't. page 7

FOR THE LOVE OF HISTORIC IRISES (con't.)

There is also the sentimental aspect of preserving old irises. Many of us were first exposed to irises in our mothers' or grandmothers' gardens, or perhaps another beloved relative or friend. Growing irises, especially the varieties they loved and passed down to us, is a way to remember these special folks. I am fortunate to have several varieties that grew in my grandmothers' gardens and a few from a great aunt as well. Most are common varieties without a particularly special history, but they are the most special of all to me.

I'd like to encourage everyone one to give a thought to iris preservation when you are discarding old varieties for new ones in your garden. If they are not commonly found in commerce anymore, please consider contacting HIPS to see if we can assist in distributing them to gardens that would welcome older varieties and make sure their beauty and potential remain around for future generations to enjoy.

Originally published *AIS Bulletin*, January 2012, page 16

HIPS Purple Based Foliage Survey

Iris in many classes can show a beautiful purple staining at the base of their foliage, on stalks or spathes. In cool sunny Spring climates this may extend far up the leaves and sometimes the entire plant may be purple. Many have admired this trait and tried to enhance it with breeding, but results still seem somewhat limited. Certainly a purple foliaged plant would make a great novelty iris

NOTICE: The first cumulative counts report on the HIPS PBF Survey is now available. To date people have reported purple-based foliage Yes/No observations for 1,338 different cultivars. Many thanks go out to the reporters. Future reports will be issued annually to reflect new incoming data. The PCT Project has also issued a handy list that combines six other existing "PBF lists" into one. Check it out.



To access these useful documents and to learn how you can report data to the PBF survey please visit the HIPS' website [HIPS PCT Project page](#)



Irises symbolize wisdom, power, passion, faith, hope and purity.

Purple Irises are linked to royalty and wisdom, while

Yellow Irises are believed to symbolize passion.

Blue Irises symbolize faith and hope, but they also symbolize blue blood or noble blood.

White Irises symbolize purity

<https://www.atozflowers.com/flower/iris/>

FALL CONFERENCE 2022 Sherry Williams

Vicki Hughes and I were able to go to the AIS Region15 Fall Conference hosted by Hi Desert Iris & Daylily Society at the Huntington Library in San Marino, Ca. It was a wonderful conference with great people and a wonderful speaker.

Our speaker was **David Toth** with Indian Creek. David's hybridizing is focused on Broken Colored, Horned, Spooned and Flounced Iris with the ultimate goal of Broken Color combined with Horns, Spoons or Flounces. David originated in California and is friends with members of the Hi Desert Iris and Daylily Society. Some of these members are responsible for introducing him to irises and he has gone on to having a wonderful iris farm in Nebraska. His hybridizing efforts have produced some amazing results and he is definitely the new generation trying to stretch the existing boundaries.



David has been so consumed by the iris virus that his two daughters have been infected. Both of his daughters have been actively hybridizing for several years.

You can find David's irises on Facebook: Indian Creek Iris Sales and David Toth Irises.

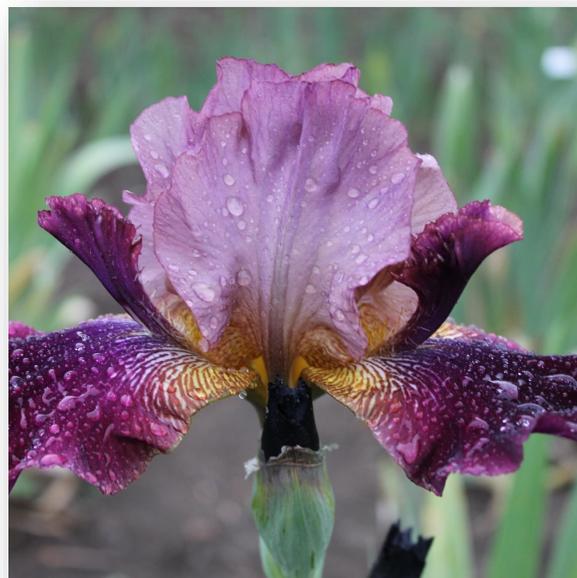
See beard details of a few of David's seedlings and introductions on page 9:



Snipe Hunting 2022 Toth

Toth iris—beard details

Snipe Hunting detail



2022 Silent Auction Sherry Williams

At our September meeting we had our Silent Auction. We had an amazing selection of rhizomes provided to us by AIS Region 15. These rhizomes are from the Spring Conference gardens and are sent to all of the Region 15 societies for their auctions. Each society then donates a portion of the auction proceeds to Region 15 to cover their expenses. In the last few years, the proceeds from the auction have not been sufficient to cover our donation to Region 15.

This year we had the best auction we've had in years. We raised \$861.00, which completely covers the \$500.00 we send to Region 15 and leaves a little for our expenses. We also had a few rhizomes left that were not purchased in the auction and those have been potted and will be included in the Spring sale next year.

Congratulations to all of you that won the auction and thank you to all of the members that participated this year. We



Photo Gary Miller

CONTACTS

President: Dennis Luebkin

1st Vice President: Marty Boxer

2nd Vice President: Vicki Hughes

Secretary: Jeri Conklin

Treasurer: Sherry Williams

Director at Large: Kathleen Shaffer

Membership: Robin Walter

**Publicity: Dennis Luebkin,
Sandra Schilling**

Community Gardens: Dennis Luebkin

Kathleen Shaffer, Diane Thornbrugh

Hospitality: Deb Wade, Vicki Hughes

Newsletter: Jean Brennan

Guardian Gardens Coordinator:

Meeting Location:

Stoneridge Community Center

1300 Stoneridge Drive

Prescott Valley

Prescott Area Iris Society

P. O. Box 11918

Prescott, AZ 86304

**[https://www.facebook.com/
groups/1048378225226372](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1048378225226372)**

**[https://prescottirissociety.org/
president@prescottareairissociety.org](https://prescottirissociety.org/president@prescottareairissociety.org)**

<membership@prescottareairissociety.org>

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Nov 6: Katy Standhardt

Nov 21: Mary soriano



Dec 2: Terry Kyte

Dec 3: Russ Taylor

Dec 4: Pam Poco

Dec 7: Eugene Zielinski

Dec 9: Sandra Schilling

Dec 10: Marge Larson

Dec 20: Carolyn Alexander

Dec 26: Nancy Lefler



Jan 1: Lori Collison

Jan 1: Dottie Moss

Jan 4: Jean Brennan

Jan 11: Kathleen Shaffer

Jan 13: J.D. Greenberg

Jan 19: Barbara McCurry

Jan 24: Angela Denis

Feb 1: Candis Peters

Feb 2: Cheryl Giovenco

Feb 3: Catherine Van Klompenburg

Feb 11: Constance Van Klompenburg

Feb 17: Bill Walter

Feb 23: Diane Thornbrugh

Feb 28 : Betty Ziffer