



PRESCOTT AREA IRIS SOCIETY

July 2009

Volume 6, Issue 5

Ice Cream Social/Iris Auction

Carolyn Alexander

By the time July 11 rolls around, it will be feeling like the dog days of summer, but we have the perfect way for you to cool off, purchase recently introduced iris and enjoy the company of fellow irisarians. Carolyn Alexander is hosting the Silent Auction/Ice Cream social beginning at 2:00 p.m. This annual auction benefits Region 15 and helps the clubs of the region put on the Spring and Fall Treks. After the Spring Trek, the club that hosted the Trek digs the iris they received from the hybridizers and ships them out to the region clubs to be auctioned at very reasonable prices. We are talking 2006-09 iris introductions which retail from \$14 - \$50.

To sweeten the deal, ice cream sundaes, root beer floats and special toppings will be served so start your diet now so you can throw caution to the wind and partake of these delicious treats. Iced tea, coffee, and soft drinks will be provided. Bring your spouse or significant other to this event as they will surely love the refreshments.

It would be great if we could get a volunteer or two for some homemade cookies to go with our ice cream. Anyone want to show-off their baking skills? Let Carolyn know by phone or email if you want to bring cookies to tempt our tummies. 778-1551 artwest@cableone.net

While the silent auction numbers are being tallied we will have a short demonstration on digging, dividing, feeding and planting rhizomes. Keeping organized with a log of named irises and maintaining a picture book and mapping your garden will be discussed.

Bring a new member and receive a \$10 coupon to use at our Rhizome Sales to buy several rhizomes of your choice. New members will also receive a \$10 coupon to redeem rhizomes. New members will shop for the rhizome/s of their choice at one of our Summer Rhizome Sales. A \$10 coupon is also given to any member who refers a new member. This will be a great meeting for new members to learn how to plant and grow their iris garden.

Directions to Carolyn's: 2555 W. Green Brier Drive, Prescott 86305

From Prescott take Iron Springs Road to Williamson Valley Road

From Prescott Valley take 89A or Pioneer Parkway to Williamson Valley Road (turn right)

From Chino Valley south on 89, right on Outer Loop Road, left onto Williamson Valley Road

From all directions you will turn onto Bard Ranch Road, turn left at stop sign onto Granite Oaks Road and turn right at next intersection onto Green Brier. We are a green house behind a green wrought iron fence. Gates will be open.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 11- Iris Auction and Ice Cream Social 2:00 p.m.

7/11/09 Master Gardeners Big Sale
See enclosed flyer

July 22- Sculpture Garden Dig

July 25- Rhizome Marking Party

August 1- Rhizome Sale
Sharlot Hall Museum

August 8- Rhizome Sale Growin'
Crazy Nursery, Chino Valley

October 9, 10- Fall Trek
Lompoc, CA

November 14- Kathy Chilton

Brain Teaser

"What gets bigger the more you take away?"

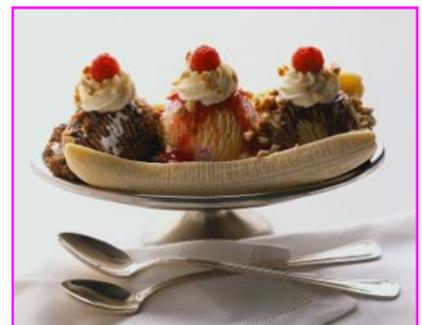
July 11 Silent Auction
Ice Cream Social, 2 p.m.

Reservations requested
by July 8.

Call or email Carolyn

928-778-1551

artwest@cableone.net



President's Message

The most noteworthy thing about gardeners is that they are always optimistic, always enterprising, and never satisfied. They always look forward to doing something better than they have ever done before.

- Vita Sackville-West, 1892 - 1962

As all our iris blossoms fade, I know you are all optimistically looking forward to the opportunity of digging and dividing. We study our clumps to determine if this is the year that a certain iris should be dug. Or is this the year that the whole bed comes up so you can rearrange the rhizomes to create better color schemes such as a black and white bed or nothing but pinks. Or maybe you want to put the iris into themes, such as grandchildren's names, friend's names or animal names. Or have we just grown tired of a certain flower and we long for something new. We study; we plan, so we can do something better this year than we did last year.

And we never seem to be satisfied. We think, if we dig that clump we can add a new one that will look better next to one that's not ready to come out. And we need more SDBs along the front of the bed so better move a few more. And the soil in the lower bed isn't producing the blossoms we'd like, so we'd better dig and amend with all the compost we so enterprisingly produced. And there are so many lovely new varieties that we just have to have them so better build another bed!

All this keeps us going and growing! The more we do, the more we learn and the more we have to share with our fellow gardeners. This enthusiasm and knowledge is what we look forward to sharing when we get together.... that and all the rhizomes we will be digging and dividing soon. Check the calendar for all the upcoming events. See you there!

Happy Gardening

Diane

Marking Rhizomes Prior to July 25 Marking Party

In order to cut down on the amount of time spent marking iris, we are asking for your help this year. Members should prepare and mark rhizomes at home and bring the marked iris to the July 25 marking party. Rhizomes should be placed in paper bags – 1 variety per bag.

Half the fun of iris is growing them, the other half is sharing. Pitch in and find out what PAIS will share with you if you:

- * Wash dirt from roots, cut roots to a length of 4 inches, cut leaves to 8 inches. Thoroughly dry the rhizomes.
- * Use a permanent Sharpie marker and write the following on the middle leaf of the fan: name, color, year of introduction
- * If possible, complete an information sheet stapled to the fan of each rhizome giving the name of the hybridizer, whether it is a rebloomer, space age, tall bearded or a median and any other outstanding characteristics.
- * Place one photo of the bloom in a sandwich bag attached to the paper bag.
- * Members who help on the day of the Marking Party get first pick of iris that will be for sale and often can get free iris if they are not 'fit' to sell. Since iris are hardy, most of these cast offs will grow, they are just not nice enough to sell. Plus there will be a bonus for all helpers.
- * Along with all these opportunities to get free iris, there is so much fabulous fun and information to be shared!
- * ***New members, this is a great way to get involved, meet other members and discover what we are all about. No experience necessary. Please join us.***

July 25 Marking Party, Cam & Ray's home

8:30 a.m. Bring scissors, clippers and your enthusiasm

Cam and Ray live at 3066 Rainbow Ridge, Prescott, in the Ranch. Take Hwy. 69 to Lee Blvd which is just east of the mall. Turn South on Lee Blvd. Stay on Lee Blvd. for about one mile until you come to the first STOP sign. Turn left at stop sign onto Rainbow Ridge. Go through an intersection and continue up Rainbow Ridge to the second house on the left past the intersection. This is about 1/4 mile from Lee Blvd. For more information: Cam 776-8660

Iris Society Contacts

Diane Clarke, President 445-7067 agoseris6@yahoo.com
Carolyn Alexander, Vice President 778-1551 artwest@cableone.net
Claude Baker, Treasurer 445-9611 cvb@commspeed.net
Ruth DeVries, Secretary 771-1051 gmama14@mac.com
Doris Elevier, Membership 636-9610 doris1434@cableone.net
Cam Waguespak—Rhizome Sale 776-8660 camw@cableone.net

2 Rhizome Sales

August 1—Sharlot Hall Museum
Prescott 9:00 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

Free museum admission

August 8—Growin' Crazy Nursery &
Garden Center, 3440 N Hwy. 89

Chino Valley

Why Plant a \$50 Iris in a 10 Cent Hole

Linda Rossman

Preparing the planting hole when digging and dividing your rhizomes.

- * You can dig your irises anytime from now to the last week in August. If you are planting your irises closer than 18" apart, make your holes at least 12 to 14 inches around, but remember you'll have to divide more often than every three years. I recommend digging a hole the size of a tire rim, remove the dirt and the rocks. Rock removal is easily accomplished with a box screen made of hardware cloth (wire mesh). I then mix the dirt with 50% forest compost. Place the mixture back into your hole and fill hole with water; this will settle all air pockets. In the next day or so when you can pack the soil down without getting muddy then you can plant your irises. Remember not to plant if your soil is still real muddy, your iris will settle lower than you want them to. You should be able to pick up the soil and have it fall through your hands. Moist but not soggy!! If you must, you can add to the prepared hole a tablespoon of bone meal, and a tablespoon of cottonseed meal, mix well with the soil. Do not use any more than that. After I plant, I'll use a mixture of Monty's joy juice and molasses, water well and then keep the iris moist but not soggy. Repeat fertilizer/molasses every 2 weeks. I use 3-4 TBS. molasses to a gallon of water and follow the manufacturer's directions for adding the liquid fertilizer. Spring is the preferred time to add bone meal and only a small amount per plant. Scratch it into your soil, water well, and do not get any on your rhizome. More information coming in the spring about fertilizing your irises

Potting iris from the auction, rhizome sale or rhizomes received through the mail.

- * It is best to pot your iris in one or two gallon pots first, that way you'll be able to keep your iris moist and can check on how much water they are getting. I use fifty percent natural soil, and fifty percent forest blend compost. Stay away from compost that has cow and or chicken manure in it. Compost with horse manure is okay. Good compost is essential to starting root development. Get the irises off to a good start with three to four tablespoons of unsulphured molasses to one gallon of water plus a liquid plant food with 2-15-15 or 8-16-8. Remember your irises need to get a good root system started before the first frost. Now you are ready to prepare your planting beds. It takes around three weeks for your iris to develop roots. By using pots you can not only save water, but you can use less of your compost mixture. Once fans start to appear, your iris are ready to be transplanted into the prepared beds.
- * If you get your irises dug and don't have time to replant them immediately, you can pot them until you're ready to plant. Remember to harden them off first. Hardening them off means that after you dig them, wash the dirt off the roots, mark them, trim them, set them in a cool place for three to five days. Once you dig your irises up the roots die, so don't think you can save them. They will need to dry.
- * Most of you remember me telling you about a product called Monty's Joy Juice. I am now selling this product. It comes in 8 oz. and 16 oz. There is Monty's growth formula (8-16-8), and root and bloom (2-15-15). I used root and bloom when I took care of last year's Region 15 irises for the sale. I think we had a first time growing experience for the Region 15 iris. If you are interested, contact me at 777-8110.
- * (Ed Note: If you dig up an iris clump that does not need dividing, but just transplanting, if you keep the dirt ball on the roots, you may just be able to plant them immediately in the newly refurbished soil without trimming the leaves or the roots. Be sure to water well.)

Sculpture Garden Rejuvenation

The iris in the sculpture garden out did themselves this year and the growth and bloom have been phenomenal which means it is time to dig, divide, replant and mark iris for our upcoming sales. We need volunteers to dig and to mark rhizomes.

Members who help dig and divide gardens are offered free rhizomes for their help. The club will be digging and dividing at the Sculpture Garden on July 22 at 7 a.m. before it gets too hot. Bring your gloves, spade and knee pads. Call or email Stan and Judy if you can help. I know some of you have already indicated your willingness to volunteer and we appreciate that!! 776-7217 jbook@cablone.net

Research has shown that people who volunteer often live longer.~~~Adam Klein.

Virtual Verde Valley Garden Tour

Candy Peters has generously taken photos of iris from various members gardens in the Verde Valley. Read about the culture ideas these members have tried in their iris gardens.

This spring we had a lot of aphid and frost problems. Some of Candy's iris were short and stems were deformed either from the aphids or the late frost. Most of the damage was on the early blooming iris. Cookie conquered her aphid problem by spraying an application of Bayer Advanced All-in-one Rose and Flower Care as soon as she saw aphids. She sprayed every 10 days giving her iris 3 applications. When Cookie planted her iris she placed 1 tsp. Bayer Advanced granules (9-14-9) and some bone meal in each planting hole. She also applied a light sprinkling of composted horse manure on her iris in early spring before the iris budded. She was rewarded with big blooms and leaves. Diana Smith had an unknown historic iris that reached 48 inches. She adds bone meal and Osmocote to the planting hole.



48" tall historic iris grown by Diane Smith



Diane Smith's iris—note tall historic lavender iris near the back on the right side



Gnus Flash - Nancy & Ray



Nancy & Ray Floyd's iris garden



Awesome Alex—Nancy & Ray

Candy Peters' Medians



Baby Blue Marine-IB 18"



Broadway Baby IB 24"



Dark Vader - SDB

Candy Peters' Tall Bearded Iris



Snowed In



Pond Lily



Chickasaw Sue

Cookie Best's Tall Bearded Iris



French Horn-space age



American Classic



Radiant Apogee



Prissy Miss

All photos courtesy of Candy Peters

Membership Drive

As part of our membership drive, Carolyn is sending the letter below to her friends and neighbors inviting them to join our organization.

Dear Friend, Neighbor and Iris Lover,

Just a note to let you know of the benefits offered this year to the 'Prescott Area Iris Society' during our Membership Drive to locate Iris Lover's who would like to be part of this great organization.

Members benefits:

- Bring a new member and receive a \$10 coupon to use at our Rhizome Sales to buy several rhizomes.
- New members will receive a \$10 coupon to be used at the Rhizome Sales to select rhizomes of their choice.
- A \$10 coupon is also given to any member who refers a new member.
- Join during August and you will have an opportunity to select a new issue rhizome valued up to \$50 next spring when the new rhizomes are introduced. In April each year we have the *New Iris Introduction Program* which allows any member who has been active in the last 6 months to order a recent introduction from selected growers.
- Members who help dig and divide gardens are offered free rhizomes for their help. Linda Rossman has done that this year. The club will be digging and dividing at the Sculpture Garden on July 22 and will offer free iris for helpers that day.
- Members who help on the day of the Marking Party get first pick of iris that will be for sale and often can get free iris if they are not 'fit' to sell. Since iris are hardy, most of these cast offs will grow, they are just not nice enough to sell.

Plan to join us at the our next meeting which will feature a silent auction of recently hybridized rhizomes from the Phoenix (Region 15) Spring Trek Show plus an 'Ice Cream Social' at Carolyn Alexander's home in Granite Oaks on July 11th at 2 p.m. Only current members and those joining the day of the event are invited.

You can come to this event and sign up to join while you are there. Membership is \$15.

One of the purposes of our club is to help members grow their irises through education and other offers such as these. There will be a brief digging, organizing, mapping, feeding & planting demonstration at our ice cream social.

Rhizome Sales August 1 & August 8

Several of you have signed up to help with the Rhizome Sales, but we need additional helpers this year since we are holding two sales. The jobs available are greeter, cashier, tally purchases, refill boxes as iris are sold, answer customers questions, setup and take down. Call Diane or Cam if you can spare several hours either day. Thank you for volunteering once again!!

Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless. ~Sherry Anderson