



PRESCOTT AREA IRIS SOCIETY

February 2010

Volume 7, Issue 1

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope everyone had a wonderful Holiday Season and are now welcoming in the New Year. As your new PAIS President I look forward to all of the activities that our Iris Society will be involved in this Spring.

Be sure to attend our first meeting in 2010 on Sunday-February 21 at 1:30-3:30 PM (new time and day). Our new Vice President, Roger Osgood, has a terrific program planned – titled “The Family of Irises”. This slide presentation will not only cover the various types of Bearded Irises but Roger will talk about non-bearded irises as well. He'll discuss and show slides of the Dutch, Spuria, Japanese, Louisiana, Siberian, Aril/Arilbred and many more types of irises.

If you have an interest in growing some of these varieties of irises you might want to consider joining the American Iris Society or one of their affiliate clubs that specializes in their iris. Go to www.irises.org to find out about memberships in any of these clubs. All iris societies publish newsletters and booklets either quarterly or semi-annually to help you learn how to plant and grow these beautiful irises. I joined most of these clubs last year and renewed again this year because I enjoy their publications and the knowledge I gain from them. I'll bring along a copy of each societies booklet for you to look at during our February meeting. This summer, I added to my gardens Spuria, Siberian and Arilbred irises and look forward to seeing their blooms for the first time this spring.

As a member of PAIS you are also a member of Region 15 (All of Arizona & Southern California). Region 15 publishes a great newsletter sent semi-annually to club members who are also AIS members. You can download the newsletter from the Region 15 web site: <http://www.region15ais.org> Region15 is involved in obtaining newly introduced irises from the hybridizers and supports our Spring and Fall Treks. Last spring the Trek gardens were in Phoenix and this year they will be in Tucson and you are invited to attend. See information in this newsletter on how to attend the next Spring Trek. Directions and a map are on the Region 15 web site.

Many of you have indicated that you like to see a garden with other plants growing in and around the irises. I personally enjoy planting Daylilies in the same flower beds with the irises. You can purchase Daylilies that bloom early, middle and late season the same as irises so that your garden is in bloom longer. If you have an interest in learning more about Daylilies a new Northern Arizona Daylily Society is being formed. The first meeting is at Mortimer Nursery on Saturday, February 27 at 10 AM. Call 776-8000 to reserve your seat.

Cont. next column →

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held at *Yavapai Title*, 1235 E. Gurley, Prescott, Gurley at Sheldon intersection.

Feb. 21 Sunday 1:30-3:30 p.m. The World of Iris

April 16-17 Spring Trek, Tucson

May 8 Spring Show Mortimer Nursery

May 11-16 AIS National Convention, Madison, WI

May 16 Garden Tour

July 17 Iris Auction/Ice Cream Social

July 24 Marking Party

July 31 Prescott Rhizome Sale

August 1 Yarnell Sale

August 7 Chino Valley Sale

October Fall Trek, So. Calif.



We have been busy making plans for our second annual AIS sanctioned Iris Show on May 8th at Mortimer Nursery. Mortimer's has agreed to increase the tent size and provide air conditioning so our irises won't wilt. The Board Members and the show chairman, Roger Osgood, have created a new Theme for our show. Learn more at our general meeting on February 21. I hope to see you soon.

Carolyn

Who says there is no free lunch?

Roger Osgood, Vice-President

Does the word “free” cause your ears to perk up and your mouth to salivate?

In my experience, there is usually nothing free about a free offer. In the end, it will cost me something, or so I think!

Well, the Prescott Area Iris Society was the recipient of something very free and very exciting this past year! Here’s the scoop.

Last October, Mortimer’s Nursery called Diane (our then president) to say that a local estate was being re-designed and they had removed hundreds of clumps of iris that the owner did not want. Were we interested? Well, who turns away free?

Without even seeing what was being offered, our response was YES! Free works for us! Well, let me tell you that our acquisition was sensational.... More about that to follow!

The immediate problem for the society was a space to plant. Nearly every member already had a full garden. I received a phone call asking if I had room to take the plants. I live in Wilhoit with 1.2 acres of land. I had only been living here a year and most of the soil on my property was in its native state..... that is to say, a lot of decomposed granite and rocks and weeds. Of course, I had room! But right now?

I said “yes” to the project, knowing that some major yard work had to be done. After all, the club had a lot of new plants for which we needed to find a new home and I had no cultivated area for the plants.

The following day, I arrived at Mortimer’s asking where I might find the donated rhizomes. I was pointed to a huge pile that was much larger than the trunk of my poor Chevy Cavalier. We filled the trunk and then all the back seats with bags and buckets of plants and soil. Then, off, over the mountain, and 16 miles to home.

Finding a location on my property was not the issue. I knew the exact spot for these beauties, but the bed was not ready. For three days we dug soil and removed

rocks.... sifting out everything except the essential soil! Then, a trip to Lowe’s Nursery, where, \$300 later, we had a truck load of Amend and peat moss that were needed to create an ideal bed for our new plants.

The rhizomes had been lifted many weeks before they arrived in our care, and I must say, they looked really sad. Some immediate TLC was in order. Mind you, it was the first week of October and every day was getting colder. We started cleaning and dividing the increases from the mother plants and plunged them into GREEN LIGHT ROOT STIMULATOR 5/15/5. I let the new rhizomes soak for about an hour and then started setting them into the soil. Plants is not the word. If you are thinking about a hundred plants, you are wrong.... Try six hundred. I couldn’t believe how many increases we had.... And the soil I had prepared was not sufficient for what we had to plant..... So, I got out the shovel and dug some more. Believe me it was a labor of love.

Even though the weather was cool, the plants rooted immediately and within 3 weeks I saw new increases on the plants. Thank you Root Stimulator. The plants have remained robust through the entire winter and I hope they will be ready for harvesting in July.... In time for our annual rhizome sale.

Now, to the best part! The homeowner had been an “iris addict” and fortunately for us, he had maintained a record of every plant. Not where it was planted, of course, but its name. Our resident expert, Judy Book, did some research and discovered that all 600 plants, representing 38 named varieties, were all re-bloomers. What a surprise!

For those interested in re-bloomers (“remontant”- is the French word used to describe them) see our articles in this and our subsequent newsletters. They bloom twice in a year, so we consider them special.

Even though this article is a bit long, I am providing the names of these plants for those of you who have an interest in these rhizomes. You will want to be first in line for our sale, when they are offered.

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Iris Society Contacts

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Claude Baker, Treasurer 445-9611 cvb@commspeed.net

Coleen Scott, Secretary 708-0414 coleen@cableone.net

Doris Elevier, Membership 636-9610 doris1434@cableone.net

Judy Book, Director 776-7217 jbook@cableone.net



Recurring
Delight,
Lauer '98,
TB, RE

No Free Lunch cont.

Again and Again, Amethyst Winter, Autumn Grandeur, Autumn Thunder, Betty Dunn, Blatant, CeeCee, Champagne Elegance, Christine Elizabeth, Clarence, Double Agent, Double Charm, Feed Back, Forever Gold, Golden Immortal, Grape Reprise, Hell's Fire, Holy Night, Immortality, Lemon Reflection, Mariposa Autumn, Mariposa Skies, Matrix, Miss Porterville, Misty Lady, Mountain Violet, Mulberry Echo, Pagan Goddess, Recurring Delight, Rosalie Figge, Sign of Leo, Speed Limit, Sugar Blues, Total Recall, Violet Classic, Winesap.

Keep in mind that while many flowers require a lot of attention and care, the iris produces a stunning flower on a plant that can survive many harsh conditions. We call the iris, jokingly, the "Wilhoit weed" because it can be found growing on the road side, un-fertilized and un-attended year in and year out.... and yet, it produces flowers. We use unidentified iris for soil erosion control, while the named varieties hold prize places in the garden. Whatever the reason you wish to grow this beautiful plant, it's beauty feeds and nourishes the soul and has since the times before the ancient Egyptians. Why not continue the tradition?

See you at the next General Meeting, February 21, when we present a program on the varieties of iris cultivated through out the world.

Cordially, Roger Osgood

Rosalie Yerkes Figge 1909-2006

While I was helping with the rhizome sale in August, I noticed that our club was selling an iris named Rosalie Figge. Who was she and why was an iris introduced in her honor? "Rosalie was always in the avant-garde of the iris world. When others in Maryland were growing only tall barded irises, Rosalie added beardless irises to her garden and introduced Siberian, Japanese and species irises to hundreds of people who visited her garden each year. She took up the cause of reblooming irises when much of the iris world expressed open disdain. She was editor of the *Reblooming Iris Bulletin* from 1978-1983. Her garden was designated a reblooming iris display and test garden by the *Reblooming Iris Society*."

"Rosalie guided and nurtured hundreds of young members of AIS. Almost everyone who ever knew her had stories about Rosalie's acts of kindness. The late Jane McKnew, one of her protégées, bred and named a beautiful deep violet reblooming iris in Rosalie's honor in

1991." Taken from "In Memoriam: Rosalie Yerkes Figge", by Clarence E. Mahan, *AIS Bulletin*, July 2006.

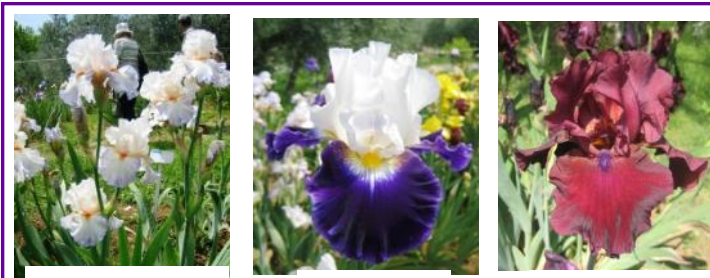


2009 Recap

Carolyn Alexander

Ah! It's nice to take a break from digging, dividing, planting and selling rhizomes. Once autumn arrives in the high country we need to leave all of those chores behind us and just enjoy the cooler days and cold nights. Our fall freeze was a little later this year. Usually we get our first freeze around September 15th but this year we didn't get our first below 32 degrees night until mid-November which meant we could have a few more rebloomers this fall. In my yard I had 3 new bearded irises from Sutton's Iris Gardens planted in August 2009 bloom in October and early November. They were Dime Spot (Moore's '85), Double Down (M. Sutton '09) & Raspberry Frost (G. Sutton '01). Many of our members reported late rebloomers as well. (If you have not sent your list of rebloomers to Judy, please do so.

Our fall general meeting was a great success with our guest speaker, Kathy Chilton from Tucson showing slides and describing her May trip to Florence, Italy for the 53rd International Iris Competition. Her experiences in Italy and her pictures were a delight for us. The judges had 150-200 clumps to judge and these had to be judged 3 different times. At this competition the following irises placed:



"Ravissant Song" (Cayeux) - 1st place; "Noctambule" (Cayeux) - 2nd place; "Fortunate Son" (Schreiner) - 3rd place.

We also voted for new 2010 officers at the November general meeting. Our new board is as follows: President-

Carolyn Alexander; Past President-Diane Clarke; Vice President-Roger Osgood; Secretary-Coleen Scott; Treasurer-Claude Baker; Director-Judy Book.

Garden Tips for February & March

General Care: A clean garden is your best defense against disease and pests. With our cloudy skies plus rain/snow our plants are getting a good soaking. Keep your iris beds free of dead leaves to aid in the prevention of Aphids and Thrips leaving their eggs between the dead leaves and the new growth.

Insects & Fertilize: To avoid Aphids multiplying spray with a direct contact insecticide like Malathion or a systemic insecticide like Bayer Rose & Flower Care insect killer and food that will protect your plants for up to a month. Bayer is available in both liquid and granulated form.. Sprinkle or scratch in the granules around the iris but not directly on them to avoid burning the rhizome. Since Bayer Rose & Flower Care is both fertilizer and insect prevention you won't need to do anything else during these two months.

Dykes Medal Garden Update

As you may know, Mystic Lake Gardens and Hummingbird Iris Gardens have donated a large number of Dykes Medal iris rhizomes for our Yavapai College Sculpture Garden historic iris project.

The garden is unique. It is a demonstration garden for southwest native plants and other water wise material. It incorporates native rocks and boulders into the landscape, creating a beautiful setting for a growing collection of fine sculpture. The garden also incorporates a riparian study area for the Biological Sciences Department of the college.

Prescott Aria Iris Society has taken responsibility for planting clumps of modern iris throughout the garden. We will be installing a bed of Dykes Medal winners in a prominent location near the small amphitheater in late May – early June.

Doris Elevier planted the Dykes rhizomes in 2 gallon pots in her famous mixture of dry horse manure and garden compost to give them a fast start. When the leaves grew and roots filled the pots, Doris transplanted them into her garden for stronger development. Many of these iris are expected to bloom this year and increase significantly. This fast start program will give us very nice iris clumps to plant in the sculpture garden this summer. Doris is also donating many of her favorite landscape rocks for garden edging.

PAIS will need many volunteers to prepare the planting bed and then for planting the rhizomes. Call Stan at 776-7217 to volunteer for this exciting opportunity.

Dykes Medal Winners

The Dykes Memorial Medal is the highest award bestowed on an iris by the American Iris Society. The award was begun in 1927 with *San Francisco* being the first winner.

The following explanation is from the AIS web site. <http://www.irises.org/awards.htm>

First awarded in 1927 the Dykes Medal is the highest award of the AIS, awarded to no more than one iris per year. Irises are eligible as a Dykes Medal candidate for three years following the winning of a classification medal. Only AIS registered judges may vote.

Medals: Each year there are Medals awarded to irises of each specific classification type. This is the top award for each AIS iris classification type. Irises are eligible as a candidate for a Medal the second year after they receive an Award of Merit (AM). One medal for each classification is given each year (except for the very popular tall bearded which awards 3 Wister Medals each year).

To view all DM winners, their photos and descriptions visit <http://www.hips-roots.com/articles/dykesmedal.html>

Left, 2008 winner, *Starwoman*, Marky Smith, 1998. The first Intermediate Bearded to win the Dykes Medal. Right, 2009 winner, *Golden Panther*, Tasco, 2000, TB.



San Francisco, Mohr, TB, 1927

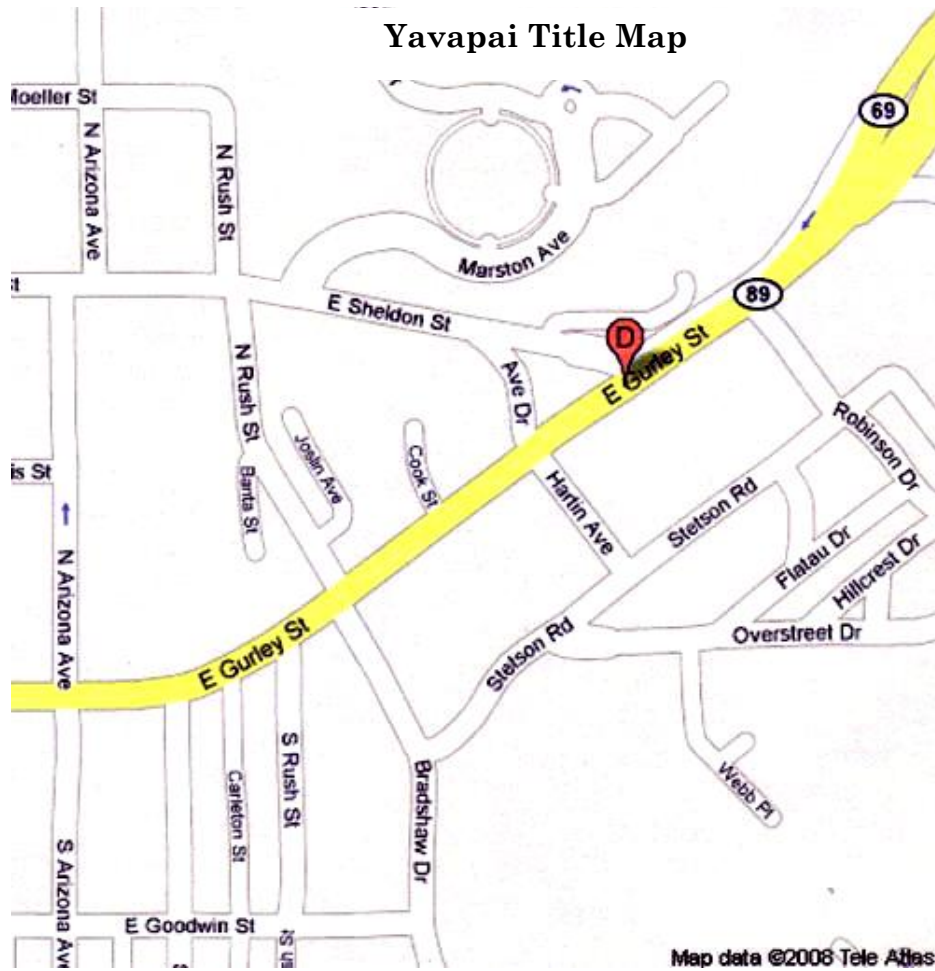


Starwoman



Golden Panther

Yavapai Title Map



Yavapai Title

1235 E. Gurley, Prescott
 Gurley at Sheldon intersection
 Yavapai Title building is on
 the southeast side of the road
 right at the light.
 Parking at rear of building.

Your Membership is DUE!

If you have not yet renewed
 your annual membership, this
 is the last newsletter you will
 receive. Mail a check today or
 pay at the February 21
 meeting. We need you!!

PAIS Membership Renewal 2010

PAIS dues run from January through December. Make check payable to: PAIS & mail to: P.O. Box 11918, Prescott, AZ 86304 or renew at the February 21, 2010 meeting and save postage.

Please enroll me/us as a _____ new _____ renewing member(s) Date: _____

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Email: _____

Dues: _____ \$15 Youth: _____ \$5

_____ \$5 dual Membership in PAIS (**Dual Club Member** - anyone with a current paid membership in a Region 15 Affiliate club) **Please note club of primary membership: VAIS _____ Other _____**

Birthdates: Month/Day ____/____ Month/Day ____/____

PAIS is only successful with the involvement of its members. Please indicate how you will help our organization: *Note: Active members in 2010 will receive a newly introduced rhizome of their choice in spring of 2011 as per agreement.*

May Iris Show _____ Door Prize Contribution/Plant Table _____

Spring Garden Tour _____ Hospitality/Refreshments _____

Rhizome Sales _____ Sculpture Garden Maintenance _____

Computer skills-circle all that apply: Email, word processing, spreadsheet, desktop publishing, financial record keeping

Tucson 2010 "Low-Tech Trek"

(All the Fun - No Frills!)

Tucson, AZ

April 16th & 17th, 2010

Contact: Kathy Chilton 520-591-1729 Ranchiris@aol.com

Headquarters: **Ramada Inn & Suites Foothills** www.ramadafoothillstucson.com

6944 East Tanque Verde Road
Tucson, AZ 85715
Phone (520)886-9595

Reserve by phone & mention "Iris Society" for rate: Regular room \$64.95 - Suite \$ 74.95

Free Breakfast & Happy Hour @ 5pm. All rooms have coffee maker, microwave & refrigerator.

Schedule

Friday, April 16th, 2010 Registration 2pm - 7:30pm

3:30pm **Region 15 Board Meeting**

4:30pm **2012 Convention Committee Meeting**

(Dinner on your own)

7:30pm **Judges Training -1Hour "Ethics" Karen Bergamo**

Saturday, April 17th Registration 7:30am- 8:30am

8:30-11:30am -- 1pm-4pm : Garden Tours

Maps & schedule available @ registration.

No busses - provide your own transportation. Lunch on your own.

6:00pm Buffet dinner & Meeting @ Hotel

(Chicken Divan, Grilled Veg., Salad, Rolls, Dessert)

Speaker: **Hugh Stout , Dancing Tree Iris & Daylilies, OKC**

Registration Form

Name(s) _____ Email (for confirmation) _____

Address: _____ State & Zip _____

FULL REGISTRATION - includes Garden Tour & Banquet # _____ @ \$40.00 = \$ _____

Partial reg. (please circle choice) **GARDEN TOUR** or **BANQUET** Only # _____ @ \$20.00 = \$ _____

Make checks payable to TAIS.

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Send form & payment to: **MAXINE FIFER**, 4527 N Camino Cardenal, Tucson, AZ 85718 (wetypefast@aol.com)