



Prescott Area Iris Society

President's Message



We did it! We hosted a regional meeting, presented an outstanding program, and enjoyed the beautiful setting of the Highland Center for Natural History. Our visitors from outside the Prescott area repeatedly praised our event, to me personally and online. Rick Tasco overwhelmed me with his presentation and judges training.

An event like this cannot happen without tremendous organization and participation .

I would like to thank a committee of PAIS members, headed up by Kathleen Shaffer—Beautiful decorations and superb breakfast organized by Isabel—Table runners by Sharon —Raffle item coordination by Sherry. Robin, Dennis, Judy and Kellie worked for months to make sure we were successful. And we were successful! Although the final financial numbers are not in yet, it looks like we actually made close to \$500.

Our next meeting is November 16. Our speaker is Kathy Chilton, a hybridizer of note. Look up the iris named after her... it's a beauty! Rumor has it there will be special prizes for those in attendance. Hope to see you there.

~Marty Boxer

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PH Levels

I received an email from Sun Country (I belong to both iris societies) reminding us to check our soil's PH level. It was suggested that the acidity be in the mid 6 range. Lo and behold, the soil I thought was great was reading at 7 and even over in some spots—too alkaline! Now I'm on the hunt for some soil acidifier crystals. I appreciate good advice, so I'm passing it on.

~Barb Walls

Iris In the Pines Fall Conference 2024



Prescott Area Iris Society hosted the Region 15 Fall Conference on October 15, 2024, this year at the beautiful Highlands Center of Natural History. Beth Train, RVP, reviewed the minutes and presented the new business of the board meeting and listened to the affiliate reports from the ten iris societies in our region. Members traveled from California and other parts of Arizona for the conference. Dykes winner Rick Tasco, a former Arizonan from Apache Junction near the Superstition Mountains, was the guest speaker for the event. He hybridizes spectacular arilbreds, species, and bearded irises. He works from Superstition Iris Gardens located in Cathey Valley, California. He also led the indoor judges training in the afternoon on arilbreds.



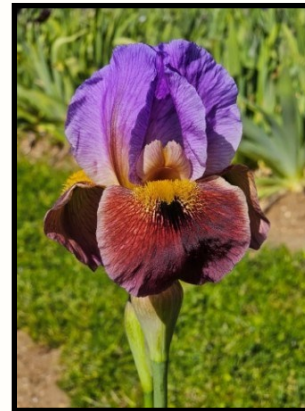
Beth Train leads the regional conference



**Region 15 Guest
Speaker
Rick Tasco**



Dennis Luebkin (left) introduced the conference guest speaker Rick Tasco for both the morning and afternoon programs. Rick Tasco has won two Dykes Medals—one for Golden Panther (2009) and the other for Splashcata (2005). The afternoon program featured judge’s training for arilbreds. Traits for Regelia include elongated standards, the V-shaped spot with contrasting colors, bearded standards, and veining. The oncocyclus feature a prominent brightly colored or darkened signal. Most of us learned an extensive new lexicon when discussing these irises. Middle left: Splashcata; Center: The Mohr Medal Winner 2024 Signal Butte; right: Ancient Reflections; Bottom left: Wister Award winner Autumn Explosion. Rick



Tasco’s presentations below, center and right.

Close-up photos courtesy of Superstition Iris Gardens.



Iris in the Pines—Informative and Fun

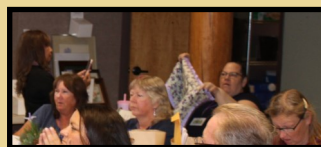


The food for breakfast and the lunch boxes with salads or sandwiches were delicious (above and left). The silent auction and raffle items were stunning (right and below). The speakers and organizers—outstanding. The attendees—fun!



Raffle Fun!

PAIS reached out for donations and brought the goods for raffles and silent auctions. Sharon Luebkin made the gorgeous table runners that were given away. Many happy winners went home loaded with gifts—many of them iris-themed. Most of all, people had fun.



November Survey: Did you have any rebloomers this fall?

All of my rebloomers were re-planted so probably won't see bloom until spring

~Gary Miller

No. Next year I'll have answers.

~Lori Kennedy-Cavins

Yes. I'm in 7B

~Kathryn Sisley

I haven't had any bloom for years. I studied about remontanant iris at a National Convention in Ontario, in books, on-line, and observed rebloomers at the Marcussen Sculpture Garden at Yavapai College. About 1/3 of my original iris in the backyard iris patch were reputed to be rebloomers for my 5,200 ft. elevation yard. With my "benign neglect" of this iris in-ground bed in HOT and DRY June, none ever rebloomed for me. Even, Rosalie Figge, reputed to be the most consistent rebloomer across the entire USA, failed to produce and it took her three years to make one unremarkable purple bloom in the spring. My "farmer" next door neighbor has placed shade cloth screening over his entire large tomato patch with great results and suggests I do the same for my iris field; inside it's heat trapping, 6 ft. tall wooden fence.

I just extend the iris season with Spuria iris, which bloom when tall bearded irises are finished.

~Katy Standhardt



I had no rebloomers this year. Autumn Circus has rebloomed for me in the past.

~Marty Boxer

I'm really disappointed because I bought dozens of irises based on their rebloomer status and I even created a bed dedicated to rebloomers. It has been a failure so far. I'm giving them the water and fertilizer they need, but I haven't been met with success. I have had a rebloomer, Autumn Tryst, put on a performance in the fall in a different bed, but nothing for the last two years. I'm no longer going to invest in rebloomers solely for that quality. I'm now in zone 8a in Pine.

~Barbara Walls

Not yet. About 10% of the iris cultivars I grow here in Zone 7b are listed as rebloomers. I need to check the RIS listing to see where they are most reliable. The only cultivar that has ever attempted reblooming is TB 'Obi Wan Kenobi' in November 2021, which was a doomed attempt. I spotted the bud stalk the first week of November and it hadn't yet opened enough to show color by Thanksgiving at the end of the month or I would have cut it to bring inside the house. OWK has a very reliable RE pollen parent TB 'Joan's Pleasure.'

~Cynthe Brush



TB Obi-Wan Kenobi

What strategies will you employ or intend to employ next summer for the intensifying prolonged heat in our area? Strategies take planning and forethought.

My SDBs don't care much for the heat

~Gary Miller

We thought we had everything set but in Kingman not much grew even with watering. Also we lost some to an intense gopher invasion. We hope to head them off next spring.

~Pat Barlow

I'll use mulch.

~Katy Standhardt

—Chopped straw on beds .

~Kathryn Sisley

I don't know what next year's weather will be! So no changes— maybe more watering

~Marty Boxer

I am concerned because of the all the heat records broken in Arizona this year. The prior summer up here in Pine had some relentless heat and plants suffered. I'm thinking about devising some sort of shade structures that I can pull down easily from the fence to cover a bed. I need to think on it, though. Elk can get tangled up in structures and we've had pictures of elk with hammocks and rope entwined in their racks. We co-exist in a shared environment, and I don't want to cause harm. I also don't want shade structures interfering with any monsoon rain. I may end up just having to mulch, but I do enjoy clean beds.

I will look closely at early bloomers henceforward. The late bloomers are well into June and the heat can scorch at that point. I'll make a point of expanding the garden with early and early-mid blooming iris rhizomes.

~Barbara Walls



I may increase or deepen watering times. I plan to add a thicker pine needle mulch to my iris beds. I may pot new purchases and wait for cooler fall temps before adding them to my beds. Irises that I planted this summer burned in the intense heat and sun.

~Cynthe Brush

What purchases from growers (iris farms like MidAmerica, Suttons, Ozark, Black Ridge, Bloomer-Rang, etc.) tend to do well in your area? (provide the zone). Do you have any rationale as to why you think some are better suited

Historic iris do well.

~Katy Standhardt

I Have not purchased from them.

~Kathryn Sisley

I'm brand new to irises. I bought from Bloomer-Rang, MidAmerica, PAIS, and online sellers this year; hopefully, next year I can answer some questions if some of mine bloom. If not .. There's the following year!

~Lori Kennedy-Cavins

I only bought from Bloomer-Rang —all are doing well .

~Gary Miller

I have bought from many different growers since I'm building up—everything mentioned above plus Eagle Ridge, Crafton Hills, Keith Keppel, Nola's, Bluebird Haven, Breezeway, Crockett Farms, Iris Sisters, Indian Creek Irises and others. I'm finding Suttons and Indian Creek grow best for me which means I don't have the losses that I have had with others. I think they get more intense heat and have more rigor. This is also true for Crazy Catahoula Irises (KC Walsh) who was out of Texas. Her irises have really flourished in my garden. I have a harder time with the Oregon groups. The rhizomes may be ginormous, but too many of those have rotted out over winter for me to be completely pleased. I lost too many the previous summer with the relentless heat, and the lackluster monsoon rains, so I am now planting later. It seems to be helping.

Bloomer-Rang, being local to us, also has irises that thrive and are inured to Arizona heat. My experience seems to be if they come from heat, their survivability improves. This is just my personal observation.

~Barbara Walls



We acquired our new iris locally this year.

~Pat Barlow

I haven't bought many rhizomes from commercial growers. I did get some from BloomerRang this year...we'll see next spring.

~Marty Boxer

I don't feel my observations are scientific enough. Some cultivars from warmer winter zones (Phoenix / California) have failed in my garden, BUT if I obtain them acclimatized from a PAIS sale or local grower, they've done fine. My current concept on this is to buy from local sources, or farms with cold winters / short growing seasons / drier climates, or to buy reliable heirlooms which tend to be resilient and tough.

~Cynthe Brush

PAIS Birthdays

Nov 6	Katy Standhardt
Nov 14	James (Jim) Obermeyer
Nov 21	Mary Soriano
Nov 27	Rich Fahey
Dec 3	Russ Taylor
Dec 4	Pam Poco
Dec 6	Leida O'Hern
Dec 7	Eugene Zielinski
Dec 8	Lisa Fahey
Dec 9	Sandra Schilling
Dec 10	Marge Larson
Dec 21	Lori Kennedy
Dec 26	Nancy Lefler
Dec 26	Larry Montgomery



2024 Calendar of Events

Unless otherwise stated, all events will be held at Stoneridge Community Center, 1300 Stoneridge Drive, Prescott Valley, 86314

November 16 General Club Meeting and 2025 PAIS Board Election

Guest Speaker: Kathy Chilton – who has the distinction of an iris named in her honor.

General meetings are 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. Speakers & Guest Speakers will be updated if there are any changes. Board meetings are at 11 A.M. on General Club Meeting days. All updates and announcements will be emailed (and included in the newsletter when possible), so be sure not to miss out on all PAIS happenings by keeping your email address up to date.



Kathy Chilton TB

I hope you've enjoyed the newsletters for 2024. I tried to not only having an issue announcing upcoming events, but also an issue covering the events after they've happened. I appreciate the help and support I received from Marty, Dennis, and the Walters this year. A big thank you for the survey participants!

~Barb Walls